HEROINES OF HISTORY
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ALL ABOUT HISTORY

CATHERINE THE TYRANT?

How Russia's 'Great' enlightened empress crushed opposition and her neighbours

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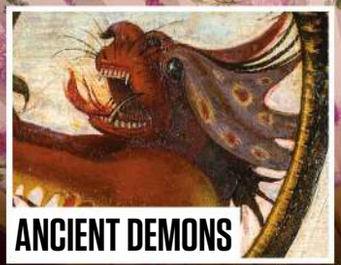
From royal menageries to public parks



ANCIENT DEMONS
Origins of the dark deities that haunted antiquity

PRESIDENT HAMILTON
What if this Founding Father had led the US?

THE FIRST NOVELIST
Story behind mysterious Japanese author

FUTURE
ISSUE 127

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*Record collections subject to change.

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A statue of Catherine the Great draped in a hood and given a noose before the statue was removed in Odessa, Ukraine

Welcome

Once again I've been sitting in front of a blank page, considering my welcome for the issue (hi there), pondering the drive we have to reevaluate the past. Is there anything new to learn or consider about figures from the past? Is it fair to apply a modern lens to them? I think it's imperative that we do, because studying history is also about learning about ourselves. The lens looks both ways. When we're faced with social challenges, injustice and inequality now, I find it helpful to look at the past and see how such issues were being considered before. Seeing that some troubles are not new might seem dispiriting, but I find some solace in seeing our progress and evolution.

How does this connect to Catherine the Great? One way of reconsidering the past is to approach it from a different perspective; in this instance the perspective of Catherine's neighbours and those in the lower echelons of society. Catherine is a celebrated, enlightened monarch. She achieved much that can be praised, but what was the cost and to whom? We welcome Virginia Rounding as our guide as we search for answers. We also happen to be packed with historical insight thanks to the historians who offered us their history heroines for Women's History Month this issue. Some great names and stories to explore there. I hope you enjoy them and the rest of the issue.

Jonathan Gordon
Editor

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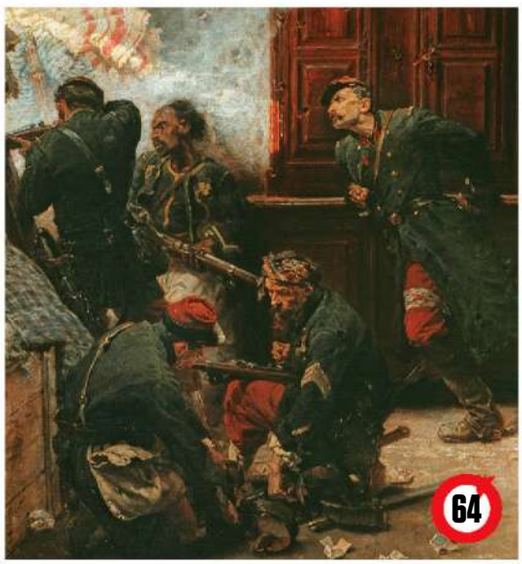

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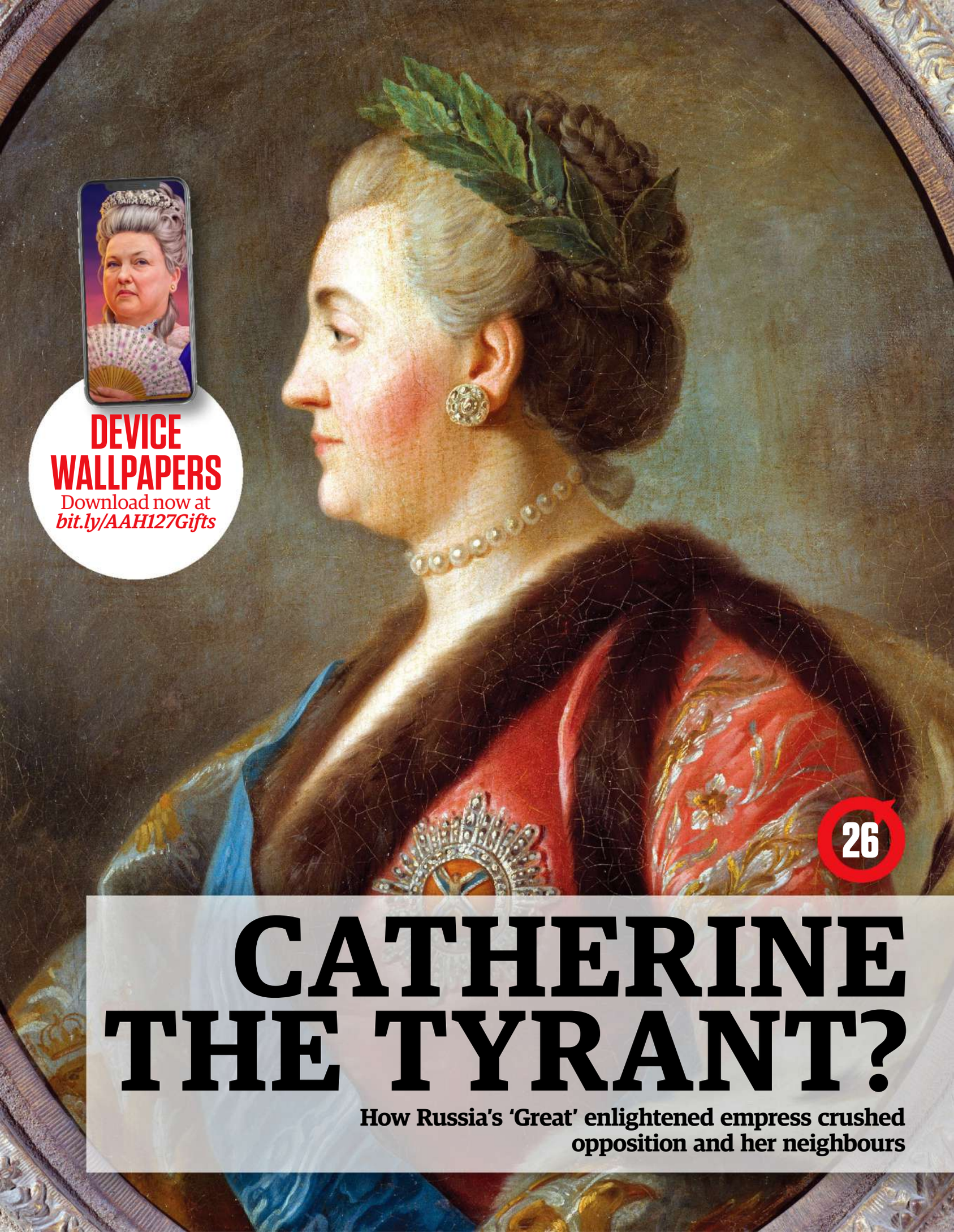

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CATHERINE THE TYRANT?

How Russia's 'Great' enlightened empress crushed opposition and her neighbours

Defining Moments

12 March 1994

THE UK'S FIRST FEMALE PRIESTS

At Bristol Cathedral a service was held to ordain the first female priests in the Church of England. The group consisted of 32 women and the first to be ordained was Angela Berners-Wilson, thus becoming the first female priest in the UK. The service was controversial with many members of the clergy, as well as parishioners, threatening to leave the Church due to the decision to allow women to join the priesthood.

© Getty Images

4 March 1933

FRANCES PERKINS IS APPOINTED TO THE AMERICAN CABINET

Appointed as secretary of labor by President Franklin D Roosevelt on 4 March 1933, Frances Perkins became the first woman to serve in a cabinet position in the US government. This accomplishment was marked by *Time* magazine when she appeared on its cover in August 1933. Perkins held her post for 12 years, becoming the longest-serving of Roosevelt's delegates. This image shows her leaving the White House after her first cabinet meeting.

CELEBRATE THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF HIP-HOP MUSIC, HISTORY AND CULTURE

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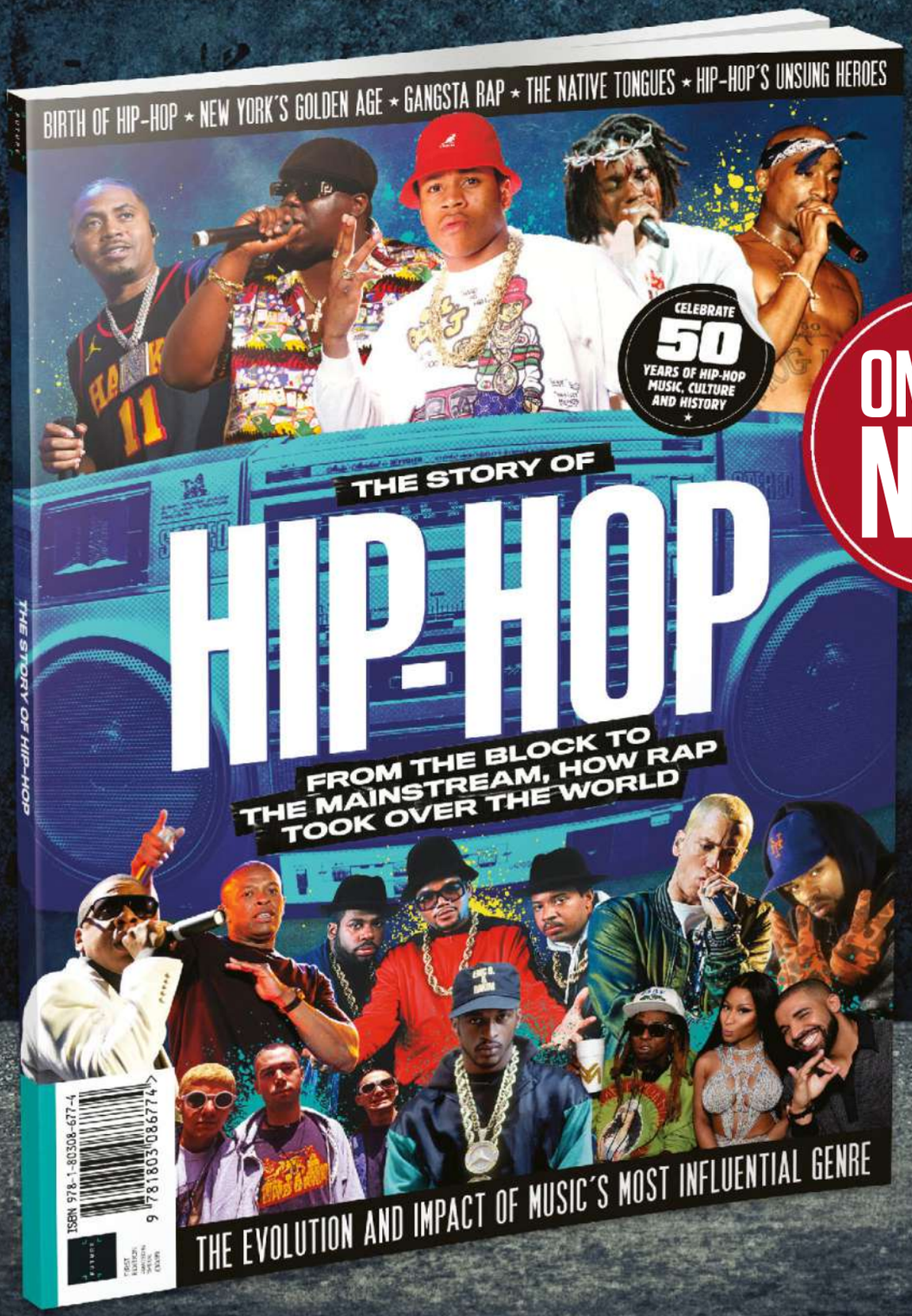
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ALL ABOUT THE BRITISH EMPIRE

From its early conquests to its slow decline, we examine the imperial reach of Britain and its impact on the world

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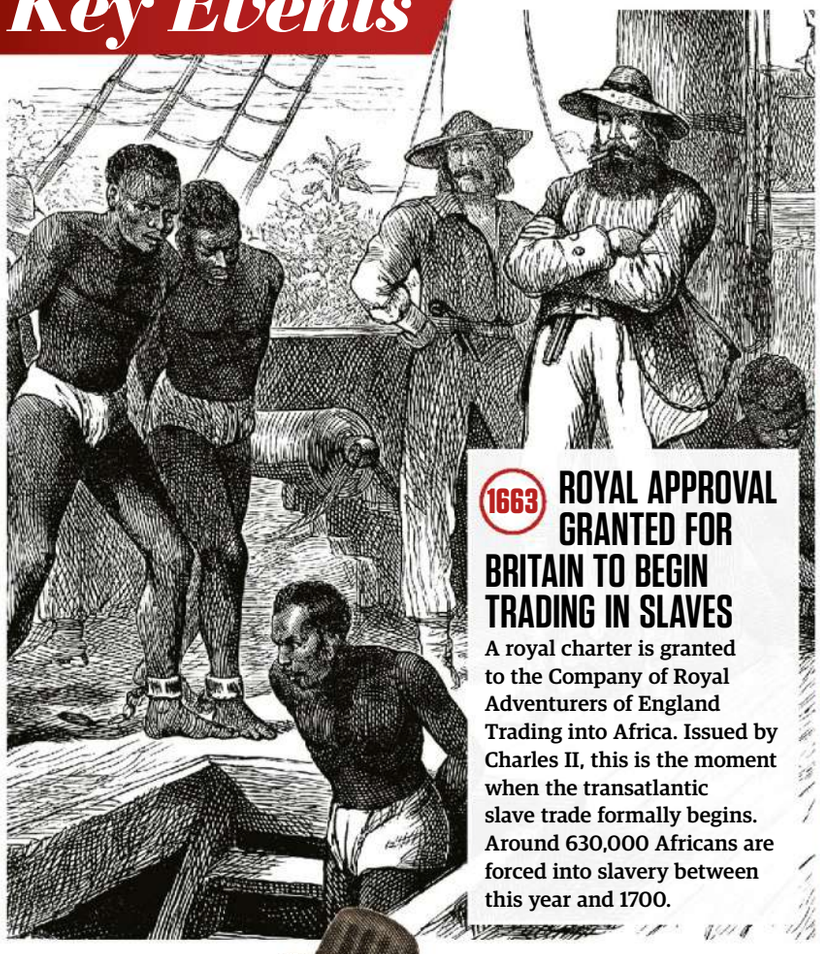
Main image: © Getty Images

Written by Callum McKelvie, Emily Staniforth

Key Events



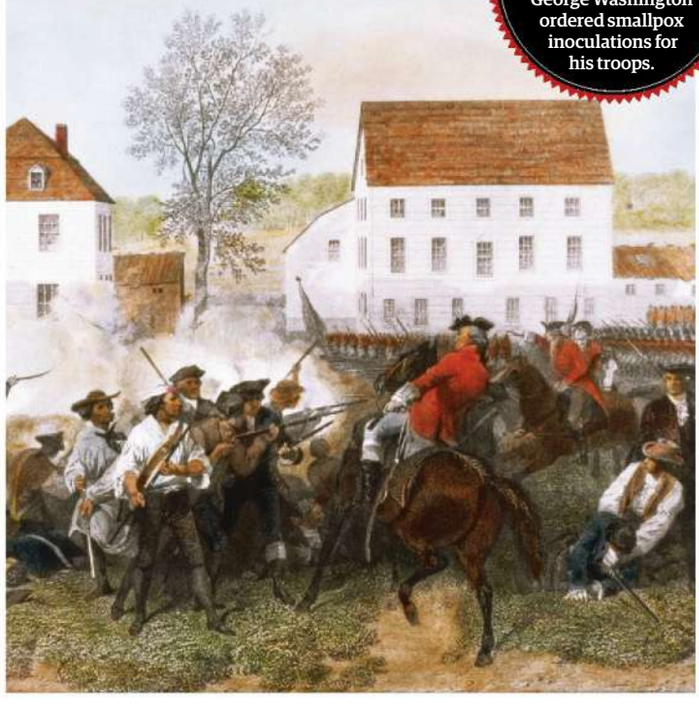
1663 ROYAL APPROVAL GRANTED FOR BRITAIN TO BEGIN TRADING IN SLAVES

A royal charter is granted to the Company of Royal Adventurers of England Trading into Africa. Issued by Charles II, this is the moment when the transatlantic slave trade formally begins. Around 630,000 Africans are forced into slavery between this year and 1700.

1775 AMERICAN REVOLUTION BEGINS

Following years of unrest the American Revolution begins with the battles of Lexington and Concord. Seven years of fighting follow, with a major American victory occurring at the Battle of Yorktown in 1781. Two years later, the Treaty of Paris ends the conflict.

As disease was responsible for a high number of battlefield deaths, George Washington ordered smallpox inoculations for his troops.



JOHN HAWKINS AND THE SLAVE TRADE 1562

John Hawkins paves the way for what will essentially be the 'slave triangle' used during the slave trade. Elizabeth I sponsors some of his expeditions.

BRITAIN CAPTURES JAMAICA 1655

At the behest of Oliver Cromwell, a British expedition sets sail for Jamaica and takes control of the island from the Spanish. In five years all Spanish forces have been defeated.

BRITISH SETTLEMENTS ESTABLISHED ACROSS THE GLOBE 1670

Settlements have been founded in North America and the West Indies. From this decade forward settlements can also be found in Canada after the Hudson's Bay Company establishes itself there.

1663

THE EAST INDIA COMPANY FORMED 1600

The East India Company is formed to share in the spice trade. During the 18th and 19th centuries its power in India increases and it becomes a powerful political force.

FIRST BRITISH TRADING POST ESTABLISHED ON THE AFRICAN CONTINENT 1661

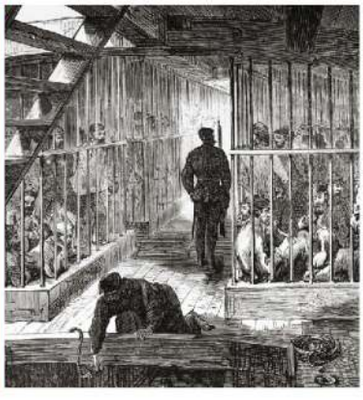
British forces capture an island from the Dutch and rename it James Island. This becomes the first British trading post on the African continent.

THE BATTLE OF PLASSEY 1757

East India Company forces, led by Robert Clive, face the last Bengal in India, Siraj-ud-Daulah. Clive goes on to serve twice as governor of Bengal and works to solidify the East India Company's power in the country.

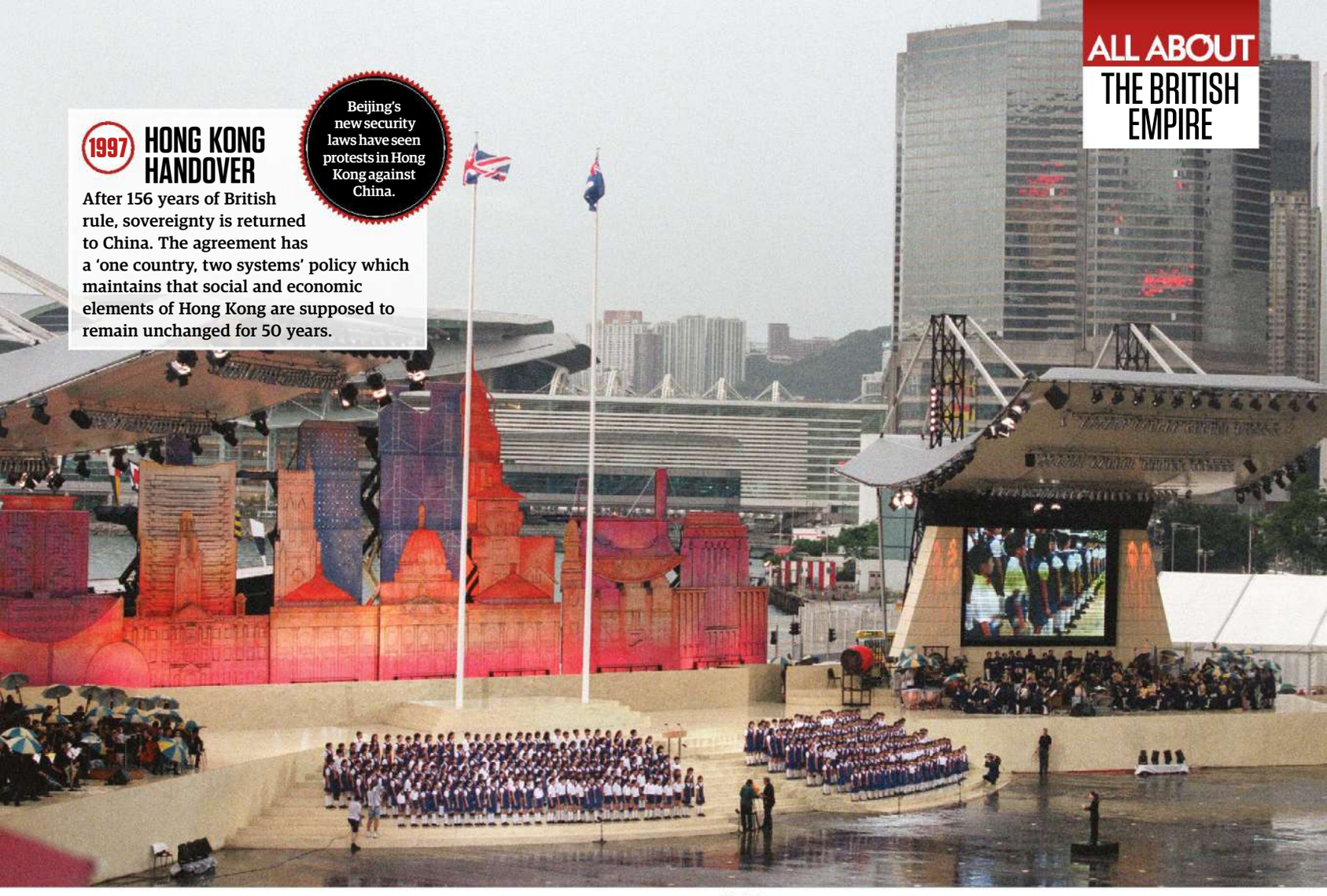
1788 THE FIRST CONVICTS ARRIVE IN AUSTRALIA

The first convicts sent to Australia arrive in Botany Bay. The Industrial Revolution has led to a surge in crime and transportation is introduced to solve the problem of what to do with Britain's prisoners. Over the next 80 years some 160,000 convicts are transported.



1857 THE INDIAN REBELLION

Indian sepoy troops rise up against British forces in India. These events lead to the abolishment of the East India Company in 1874, with the British Crown instead taking control of rule in India. The army is reorganised to reduce its reliance on Indian troops.



Beijing's new security laws have seen protests in Hong Kong against China.

1997 HONG KONG HANDOVER

After 156 years of British rule, sovereignty is returned to China. The agreement has a 'one country, two systems' policy which maintains that social and economic elements of Hong Kong are supposed to remain unchanged for 50 years.

BOSTON TEA PARTY 1773

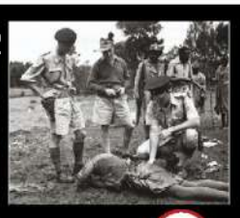
Colonists furious at Britain for increased taxation protest by hurling 342 chests of tea into Boston Harbour. This is a key event on the road to the American Revolutionary War.

BRITISH OCCUPY HONG KONG 1841

As part of the Opium Wars Britain attacks China and occupies Hong Kong. In 1841 the island is formally ceded to the British.

MAU MAU UPRISING 1952

Kenya's largest ethnic group, the Kikuyu, are increasingly victimised by laws favouring white settlers. Militant action to reclaim land lost begins and the British impose a violent crackdown.



1775 1788 1857 1899 1947 1997

SLAVERY ABOLISHED 1833

Slavery is abolished in most British colonies. Some 800,000 slaves are freed as a result. But the act does not refer to British North America.

BRITISH COMMONWEALTH OF NATIONS 1931

In 1926 the Balfour Report states that Britain and its dominions should be equal in status. This is formalised in 1931 and the dominions' links to Britain become largely symbolic.

GHANA INDEPENDENCE 1957

The Gold Coast, now known as Ghana, gains independence from Britain. It is the first sub-Saharan African colony to gain independence.

1899 SECOND BOER WAR

Britain fights a bitter war against self-governing Afrikaner, or Boer, colonies in Africa. The war introduces many modern industrial fighting methods, including the use of machine guns and concentration camps for civilians. Britain eventually wins the conflict.

1947 DECLARATION OF INDIAN INDEPENDENCE

The Indian Independence Act is passed, creating modern-day India and Pakistan. The aim is to create two distinct states, one primarily Hindu and one Muslim. While the granting of independence is welcomed, Viceroy Mountbatten's handling of it is criticised and results in outbreaks of violence.

All images © Alamy, © Getty Images

VICTORIA MEMORIAL HALL

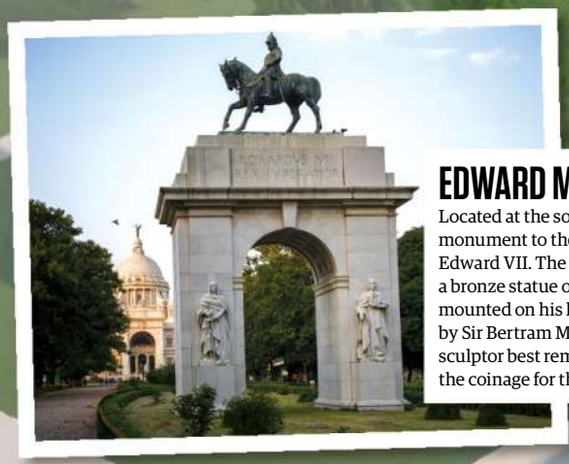
Kolkata
1921

When Queen Victoria passed away on 22 January 1901, the outpouring of grief was tremendous. She had reigned for 63 years and at that time was the longest-ruling British monarch. The impact of the queen's death was felt not just in Britain but across the British Empire. In Imperial India, the then-viceroy, Lord George Nathaniel Curzon, declared that a vast monument to the late queen would be built, known as the Victoria Memorial Hall.

This structure was designed by the celebrated architect William Emerson, also known for All Saints Cathedral in Allahabad. Curzon instructed Emerson that the memorial should be suitably "stately, spacious, monumental and grand". However, his plans went far beyond a mere monument to the late queen and he also stated that the memorial should house a museum – a space where he decreed "all classes shall learn the lessons of history."

The foundation stone was laid by the Prince of Wales (the future King George V) in January 1906. However, work would not begin until 1910, and due to numerous issues during construction the monument was not open to the public until 1921.

On 24 January 1989, UNESCO acknowledged the historic importance of the Victoria Memorial Hall by granting it the status of a World Heritage Site. Today, the memorial hall contains some 25 galleries and regularly welcomes thousands of visitors every year. Its collection relates not only to Queen Victoria but also to British Imperial rule in India between 1700 and 1900. The Victoria Memorial Hall stands as both a monument to Queen Victoria but also as a conspicuous artefact of the British Empire.



EDWARD MEMORIAL ARCH

Located at the south entrance is this monument to the queen's successor, King Edward VII. The Memorial Arch contains a bronze statue of Edward, depicted mounted on his horse. The sculpture was by Sir Bertram Mackennal, a renowned sculptor best remembered for designing the coinage for the reign of King George V.

MEMORIAL HALL DESIGN

The building is 56m (184ft) tall and occupies a 64-acre space. Its design by William Emerson is said to have mimicked the style of the Italian Renaissance, however others state that it purposefully evokes the Taj Mahal. The hall is constructed out of white Makrana marble, brought from Rajasthan – the same substance used in the construction of the famous mausoleum.

QUEEN VICTORIA BRONZE

Located near the King Edward VII memorial arch is George Frampton's bronze bust of Queen Victoria. She's depicted in her later years, contrasting Thomas Brock's youthful portrayal which adorns the interior of the hall. Victoria is also wearing the robes of the Order of the Star of India, a chivalric order implemented to honour Indian dignitaries following the suppression of the Indian Mutiny in 1857-58.

ANGEL OF VICTORY

Atop the central dome stands an impressive 5m (16ft) bronze figure, The Angel of Victory. Surrounding the dome are several other sculptures, representing charity, art and architecture among other concepts. The North Dome has a further series of statues representing ideas such as motherhood, learning and prudence.

LORD CURZON STATUE

At the southern entrance is a statue of the Lord George Nathaniel Curzon, Victoria Memorial Hall's instigating figure, constructed in marble and designed by William Frederick Pomeroy. The statue was previously located at the northern entrance but was relocated to the other side several years later.

GARDENS

The memorial's gardens were originally designed by Lord Redesdale and the famous Scottish botanist David Prain. Today, a team of 21 gardeners is employed to keep the grounds in pristine condition.

SALISBURY'S MURALS

Located in the Victoria Memorial Hall, high above the marble statue of Queen Victoria, are a series of 12 mural paintings by renowned British painter Frank Salisbury. The sequences depicted include her marriage to Prince Albert as well as her acceptance of the British Crown. Salisbury was a British painter and stained-glass artist, famously painting the portraits of five British prime ministers.

KOLKATA GALLERY

Lord Curzon first visualised the Kolkata Gallery in 1901 and intended it to be the first museum dedicated to an Indian city in the country. However, this was never realised and for decades the space had no dedicated use until 1992, when the gallery was finally opened. North of this was another unused space which, following Indian independence in 1947, was transformed into the National Leaders Gallery.

MEMORIAL HALL

This vast space is located under the central dome and includes Thomas Brock's huge statue of a young Queen Victoria. This appears to have been commissioned after George Frampton's bronze was deemed unsuitable. This hall also has the queen's pianoforte on display. This was the same piano with which Queen Victoria was tutored as a teenager and was gifted to the hall in 1905 by King Edward VII. The queen's correspondence desk was also gifted to the hall by the king.

THE ROYAL GALLERY

Originally named The Picture Gallery, this room has now been renamed The Royal Gallery and contains numerous paintings and etchings of the late queen and other royals. One of the paintings now displayed in this room is the oil portrait of the Prince of Wales' entry into Jaipur, the largest oil painting in India.

Illustration by Adrian Mann
Inset images: © Alamy, © Getty Images

Anatomy

SEPOY

India
1785

JACKET

The first sepoy regiments were formed in the East India Company (EIC) by Robert Clive. He purportedly gave them standard uniforms to wear, though other sources state that they originally wore more indigenous clothing. The jackets were the same vibrant red as those worn by other EIC soldiers. However the collar, cuffs and lapels differed in colours to those worn by their British counterparts.

SEPOY'S IN THE EIC ARMY

Sepoys were Indian soldiers recruited and trained in the European fashion in the service of the EIC. They were an important part of the EIC's formidable army, which at one point was double the size of the British Army and numbered some 275,000 men. However, unlike their British counterparts sepoys were not permitted to become officers. In 1857 a group of sepoys mutinied in a rebellion that lasted until July 1859.

CHAPLIS

On his feet the typical sepoy would wear a type of light military sandal known as chaplis, made out of leather. In subsequent years, these soldiers would be given tough leather boots to wear. Above the footwear, despite wearing jangheas (a type of shorts), their legs would be kept bare and exposed.

TURBAN

Sepoys would wear various types of turban. The Madras sepoys were known to wear a hat known as a shako or turban, whereas the Bengal sepoys were known to wear a 'sundial' turban. For the Bombay sepoys, the turban worn would usually be of their regiment's colour. The Royal Horse regiments had some of the most decorated turbans, sometimes using cheetah or leopard skin and horse-hair manes.

RANK

The rank of a sepoy could be determined in several ways. As well as wearing trousers instead of jangheas, rank could be indicated by a coloured sash or cummerbund around the waist, or coloured stitching on the uniform. Some turbans had brass plates on the front that identified the soldier's rank.

JANGHEAS

Jangheas were a type of shorts worn by sepoys, and these largely differentiated them from their British counterparts. Jangheas only extended down to the knee and had decorative leg openings. From 1801 sepoys were permitted to wear a type of trouser known as jodhpurs. However, previously these had been symbolic of an individual's rank.

AFTER THE EIC

Sepoys were not solely used by the EIC and also served in the British Indian Army. The uniform of the sepoy continued to develop throughout the decades, even when they served alongside British soldiers during World War I. Some 621,224 Indians were sent to fight in the conflict, and another 474,789 assisted in a non-combat roles.

Illustration by Kevin McGivern

Historical Treasures

PARTHENON SCULPTURES

These controversial marble artefacts once adorned Greece's most famous temple

Greece, 5th century BCE

The Parthenon is one of the most iconic structures in Greece and a prominent representation of the country's ancient history. Standing on top of the Acropolis hill in Athens, it was built between 447 BCE and 432 BCE originally as a religious temple dedicated to the goddess Athena. The building now stands in ruins, and although it is still an impressive site, much of the original structure is missing. Many of the decorations that once adorned the temple can now be found inside the British Museum.

A collection of marble statues and panels of the frieze that used to run around the Parthenon were purchased by the British government from Lord Elgin, an aristocrat and politician who acted as the British ambassador to the Ottoman Empire. In the 19th century, the Ottomans had been the ruling power over Greece for around 350 years. From 1801, Elgin obtained a permit from the Ottomans to remove surviving pieces from the Parthenon (around half of the building's architectural features had already been destroyed or lost) and other structures from the Acropolis.

It is from Elgin that the Parthenon Sculptures received their alternative name: the Elgin Marbles. The British government entrusted the collection to the British Museum after a parliamentary investigation in 1816 concluded that Elgin's actions in acquiring the artefacts were legal.

Controversy has surrounded the Parthenon Sculptures since Elgin brought them back to Britain. Conversations between Greece and the UK over where the artefacts belong continue to be a source of contention as the topic of colonial acquisitions dominates the cultural and political landscape of the 21st century. With Greece asking for them to be returned as an important part of the country's heritage, Pope Francis announced that the few Parthenon artefacts held by the Vatican would be returned to Greece in 2022. An agreement has yet to be reached with the UK, which holds by far the most Parthenon objects outside of Greece. In the meantime, the Parthenon Sculptures continue to be displayed at the British Museum.

THE POSSIBILITY OF RETURN

The British Museum states that Greece first requested that all the Parthenon Sculptures be returned in 1983. Negotiations between the two countries have been ongoing, with it being revealed in 2022 that the future of the marbles had been discussed in secret talks.

ABOVE The Parthenon as it stands today

A TRIO OF GODDESSES

This particular example of one of the Parthenon Sculptures depicts three Greek goddesses: Hestia, the goddess of the hearth and home; Dione, the mother of Aphrodite; and Aphrodite, the goddess of love and beauty. Other gods and goddesses also feature in the sculpture collection.

HIGH ART

The three figures of goddesses are some of the Parthenon's pedimental statues that survive. Around 50 sculptures of this kind made up the pediments - the triangular spaces in the gabled roof of the temple. These sculptures came from the Parthenon's east pediment.

STOLEN GOODS?

While Lord Elgin was cleared of any wrongdoing by a parliamentary investigation in 1816, there are still questions over whether the permission he obtained from the Ottoman authorities to remove the artefacts is grounds for them to remain in the UK.

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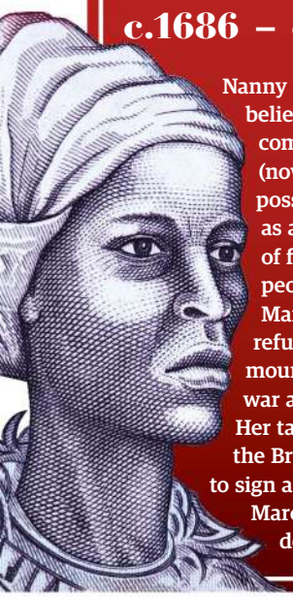
REBELS OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE

These revolutionaries stood up and fought against British colonial rule in their home nations

Nanny of the Maroons

Ghanaian, c.1686 – c.1733



Nanny of the Maroons is believed to have originally come from the Gold Coast (now Ghana) and was possibly taken to Jamaica as a slave. She led a group of formerly enslaved people - the Windward Maroons who had sought refuge in the Jamaican mountains - in a guerilla war against the British. Her tactical prowess meant the British eventually had to sign a peace treaty with the Maroons as they couldn't defeat them.

Dedan Kimathi

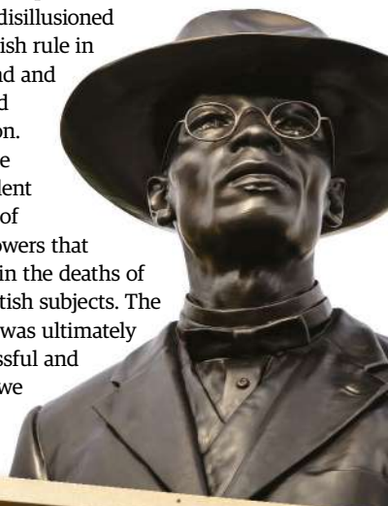
Kenyan, 1920-57

Dedan Kimathi was a leader of the Mau Mau Uprising in Kenya. The Kenya Land and Freedom Army (also called Mau Mau) was established to combat British colonialism in Kenya, and Kimathi joined the radical group in 1951. Kimathi quickly became an important member and when the British declared a state of emergency in 1952, he led rebel fighters into the forests to fight. Many Kenyans were killed in the conflict, as well as white settlers and British fighters. Kimathi was eventually captured after being shot in the leg. He was tried and hanged for his involvement in the rebellion.

JOHN CHILEMBWE

MALAWIAN, 1871 – 1915

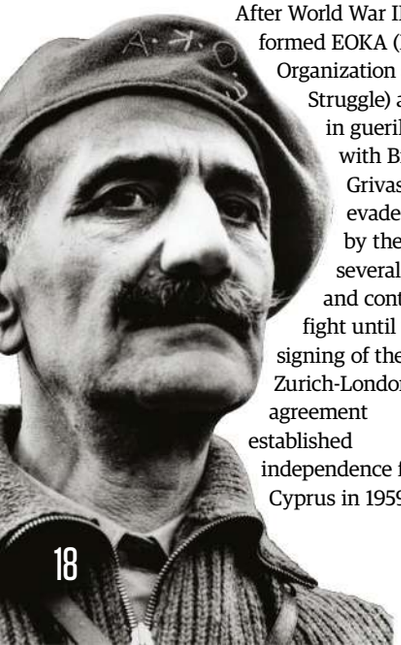
John Chilembwe is credited with being the first instigator of Malawian independence. After spending time in the USA, Chilembwe returned to his home of Nyasaland (now Malawi) in 1900 as a Baptist minister. Chilembwe became disillusioned with British rule in Nyasaland and organised a rebellion. In 1915 he led a violent uprising of 200 followers that resulted in the deaths of three British subjects. The uprising was ultimately unsuccessful and Chilembwe was shot dead.



GEORGIOS GRIVAS

CYPRIOT, 1897 – 1974

Though he failed in his ultimate aim to form a union between Cyprus and Greece, Georgios Grivas' resistance against British colonial authorities resulted in Cypriot independence. After World War II, Grivas formed EOKA (National Organization of Cypriot Struggle) and engaged in guerilla warfare with British forces. Grivas managed to evade being captured by the British on several occasions and continued to fight until the signing of the Zurich-London agreement established independence for Cyprus in 1959.

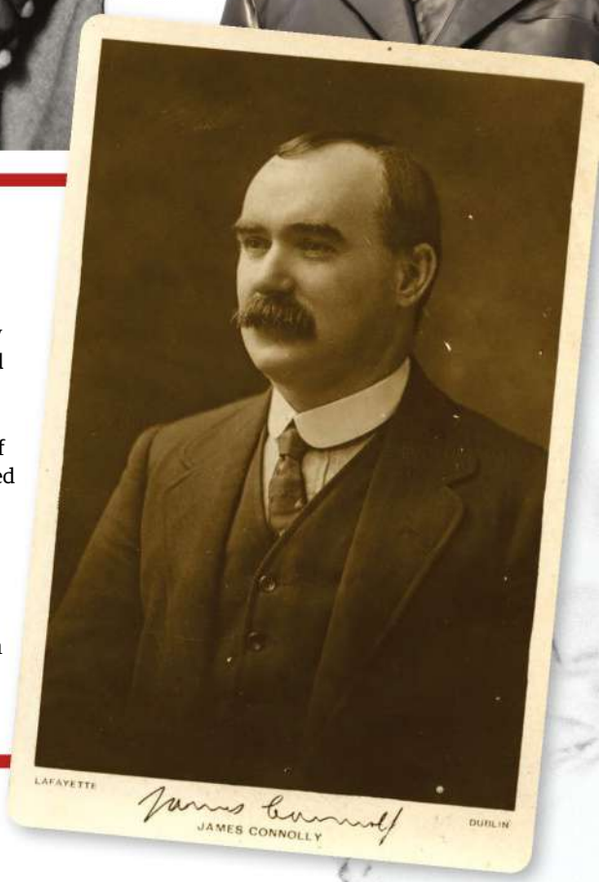


James Connolly

Irish, 1868 – 1916

Born to Irish parents in Scotland, James Connolly moved back to Ireland as an adult. He established the Irish Socialist Republican Party, wrote extensively on Irish nationalism and backed the founding of the Irish Labour Party. As the head of the anti-British Irish Citizen Army, Connolly joined forces with the Irish Republican Brotherhood to plan a rebellion. The subsequent Easter Rising of 1916 saw Connolly lead his army in their fight against the British. After six days of violence, the Irish leaders surrendered and Connolly, who had been injured in the fighting, was tried by the British and executed by firing squad.

The execution of James Connolly and the 15 other rebel leaders of the Easter Rising sparked outrage across Ireland.



Mahatma Gandhi
Indian, 1869 – 1948

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi spent his early career in South Africa working as a lawyer. He experienced racial discrimination from white Europeans and drew international attention during a campaign of passive resistance against the South African government. Gandhi returned to India in 1914 and after World War I became the leading figure of the campaign for Indian independence from the British. He encouraged Indians to boycott British-controlled enterprises and promoted peaceful protest. Despite being arrested and imprisoned in 1922 until 1924, Gandhi continued his campaign and frequently went on hunger strikes for his cause. He was assassinated in 1948 by a Hindu extremist.

India's independence leader Mohandas Gandhi came to be known by his followers as Mahatma, meaning 'great-souled'.

HUDA SHA'RAWI
EGYPTIAN, 1879 – 1947

Image source: wikilibarrito.com

In 1919, mass demonstrations took place in Egypt against British colonial rule. During this time Huda Sha'rawi, an Egyptian feminist activist, led women's marches in support of independence: the March of Veiled Women in Cairo was the first female demonstration of this kind. They protested against colonial rule and the British aim to exile leaders of the Egyptian nationalist movement, which included Sha'rawi's husband. Her leadership saw women become a vital part of the independence campaign.

BAI BUREH
SIERRA LEONEAN, 1840 – 1908

The ruler of Kasseh in northern Sierra Leone, Bai Bureh was a skilled and revered warrior. In 1898 the British colonial authorities introduced a 'Hut Tax' on the people of Sierra Leone, which Bai Bureh refused to pay. In response he led his followers in a rebellion against the British. He eventually surrendered in late 1898 and was exiled by the colonial forces. However, he returned home in later life and was reinstated to his chiefdom.

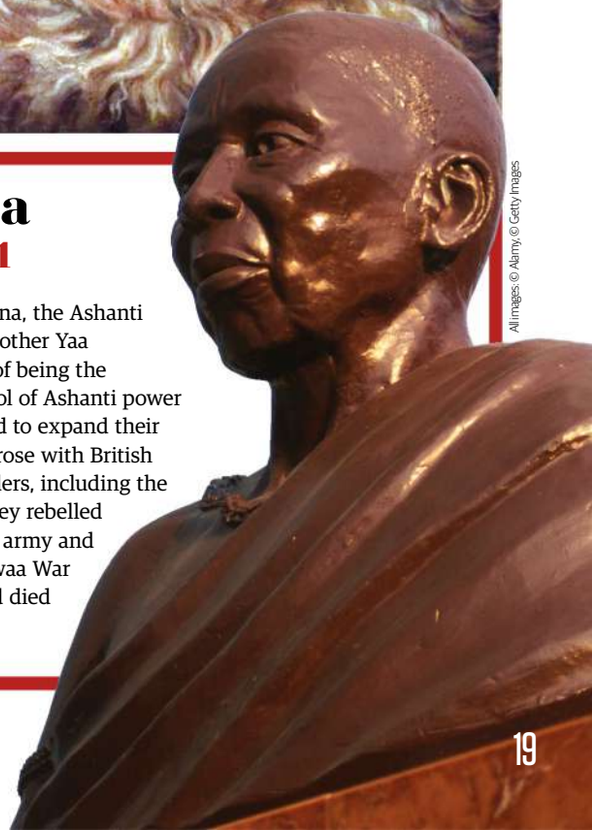
Hōne Heke
Maori, 1807-50

A chief of the Ngāpuhi iwi (iwi translates as people/tribe), Hōne Heke had been in favour of British involvement in New Zealand when he was one of the signatories of the Treaty of Waitangi in 1840, giving the British sovereignty over the country. However, when it transpired that the British were imposing their authority over Māori affairs, Heke became disabused of their assurances of prosperity and, in 1844, demanded they stop interfering. He ordered a British flagpole to be cut down and eventually war broke out between the British and Heke's supporters. He spent the rest of his life promoting Māori autonomy.

When the British re-erected their flagpole that had been cut down, Hōne Heke had it chopped down again. This happened a total of four times.

Yaa Asantewaa
Ashanti, 1840 – 1921

Now incorporated into present-day Ghana, the Ashanti Confederacy was the home of Queen Mother Yaa Asantewaa. She had the responsibility of being the gatekeeper of the Golden Stool, a symbol of Ashanti power wanted by the British as they attempted to expand their empire in Africa. Tensions in Ashanti arose with British presence in the region and Ashanti leaders, including the king, were exiled by the British after they rebelled against them. Yaa Asantewaa rallied an army and in 1900 went to war in the Yaa Asantewaa War of Independence. She was captured and died in exile in the Seychelles.



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SLAVERY AND THE EMPIRE

Padraic X Scanlan discusses the role slavery played in the British Empire

How did the British Empire first become involved in slavery?

First, it's important to remember that the slave trade was a part of a much larger political and economic system that relied on the mass enslavement of African labourers. Second, when Britain first became involved in the transatlantic slave trade, the British Empire did not yet exist. England and Wales united with Scotland in 1707 to form the new polity of Great Britain and subsequently Ireland in 1800-01 to form the United Kingdom. So, the British Empire did not *become* involved with slavery, it was made during an era when plantation slavery and the transatlantic slave trade were hugely profitable. In the 16th century, English privateers captured ships carrying enslaved people and precious metals sent by the Spanish and Portuguese - the English slave trade began with piracy. Beginning in the 17th century, however, England established Caribbean colonies such as Barbados, Virginia and Jamaica that very quickly became slave colonies. These outposts of the English empire produced commodities for the global market, especially sugar and tobacco. The profits of trade in goods produced by enslaved labourers helped to pull the British Empire together. Britain prided itself on its commercial empire, and enslaved labour was a pillar of commerce in the Atlantic in the 18th century.

Padraic X Scanlan is assistant professor at the Centre for Industrial Relations & Human Resource and the Centre for Diaspora & Transnational Studies at the University of Toronto. He is the author of *Slave Empire: How Slavery Built Modern Britain* (Robinson, 2020).

Photo courtesy of: Audrey D. Cooper

LEFT
The British antislavery movement was itself useful to the further expansion of the British Empire in the 19th century

How integral was slavery to the British Empire?

It's hard to overstate the importance of enslaved labour to the origins of the British Empire, especially in the Atlantic world. As Daniel Defoe wrote in 1713: "No African trade, no negroes; no negroes, no sugars, gingers, indigoes etc; no sugars... no islands, no islands no continent; no continent, no trade." Throughout the 18th century Britain's empire (in the course of a nearly century-long war with France) acquired a number of colonies throughout the Caribbean and the Caribbean coast of South America. Places like Barbados, Antigua, Jamaica, these colonies became crucial to Britain's trade. Enslaved people were brought there by force as labourers and these colonies produced what was one of the world's most valuable commodities, sugar, for which there was almost inexhaustible demand in Europe and in the European colonies in North America. Slave labour became an engine of economic growth, so much so that a place like Massachusetts, which never had plantation slavery, grew prosperous trading with the Caribbean colonies. Enslaved labour became the centre of an entire economic system.

Can you tell us a little about the 19th century abolitionist movement?

It's important to remember that many Britons opposed slavery, for a mixture of religious, moral, economic and practical reasons, before an empire without slavery seemed plausible or even possible. And enslaved people

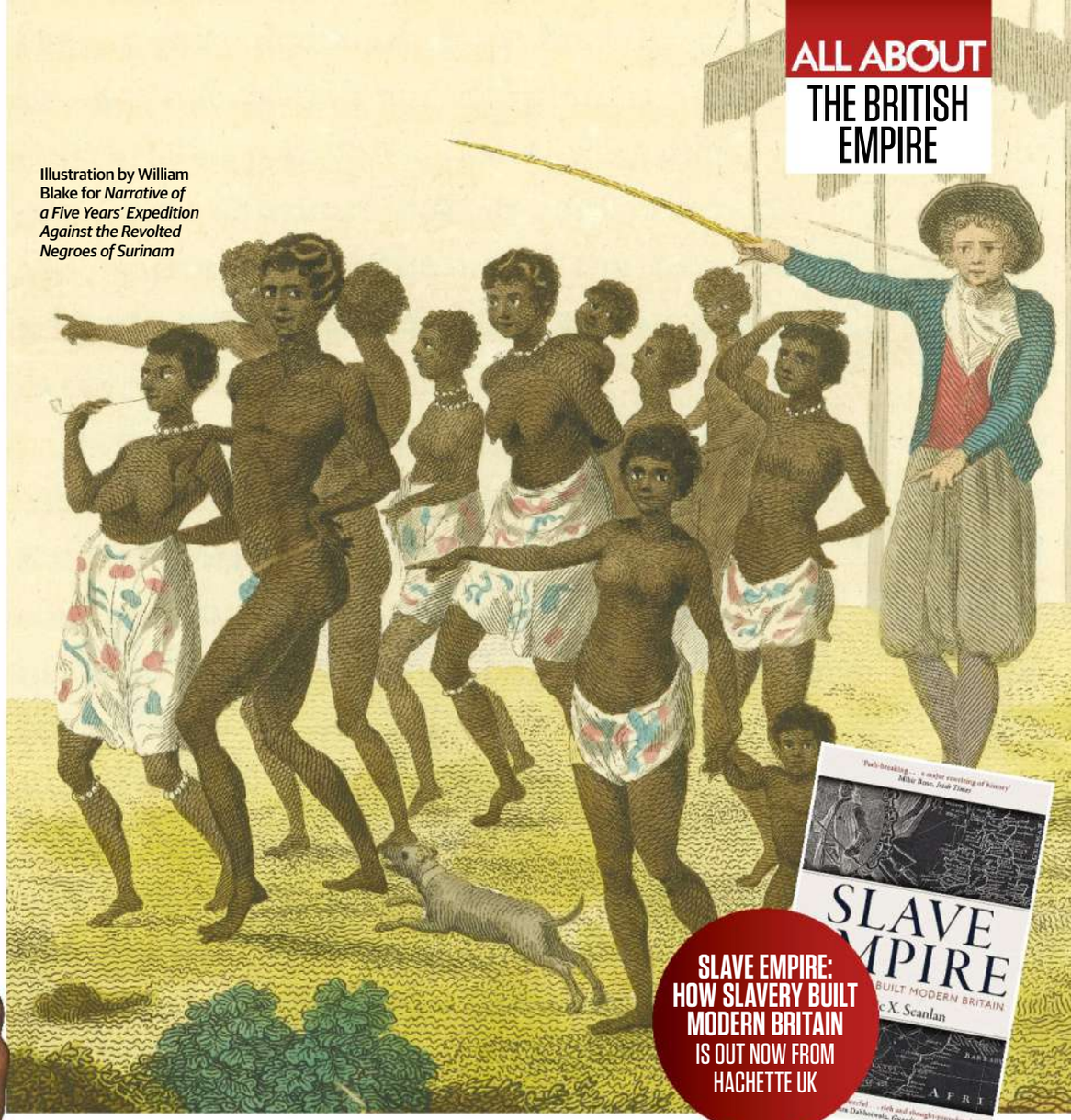
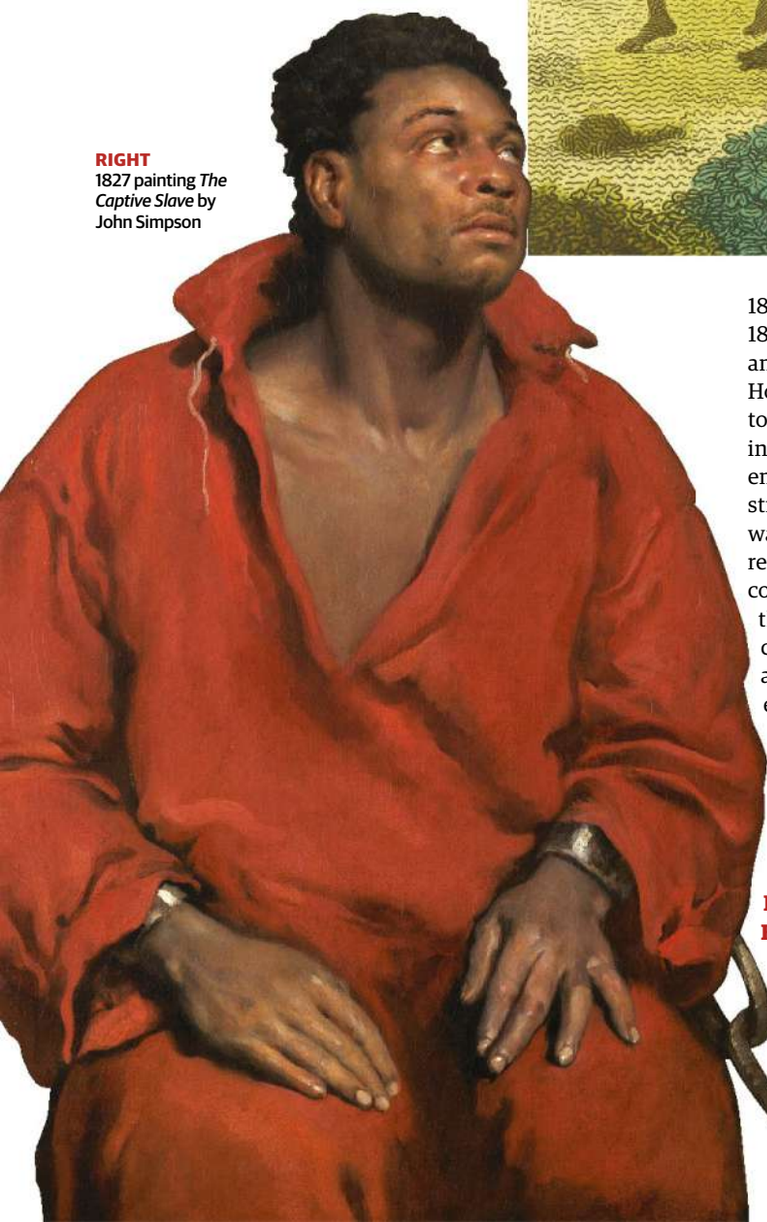


Illustration by William Blake for *Narrative of a Five Years' Expedition Against the Revolted Negroes of Surinam*

SLAVE EMPIRE: HOW SLAVERY BUILT MODERN BRITAIN
IS OUT NOW FROM HACHETTE UK

opposed the system that exploited them from the outset, in many ways; from overt rebellion to covert resistance, for example by controlling the pace of their work as much as was possible, or even by cultural survival in defiance of enormous pressure. One of the things that I try to draw out in my work on the British antislavery movement is that while the movements that opposed slavery in Britain had, on the face of it, the same goal as leaders of rebellions in the Caribbean colonies, emancipation to an enslaved person was often dramatically different to what the British abolitionists imagined and then enacted in law. I've noticed in UK popular discourse the argument that the antislavery movement represents an ultimate example of the virtue of British imperialism and proof that Britain's empire was morally superior to other European empires. People who make this argument claim that the end of the British slave trade, in 1807, and of most colonial slavery, in 1834, were a sacrifice of imperial power and wealth in the name of justice. However, antislavery was itself useful to the expansion of the British Empire in the 19th century. First, formerly enslaved people in the Caribbean were still exploited and oppressed, but as wage labourers. Second, Britain could reshape trade routes, or even claim new colonies, in the name of antislavery. And third, British merchants and bankers continued to trade in American cotton and American debt – cotton grown by enslaved people in the United States was the lifeblood of the British cotton industry. I think the golden glow around the antislavery movement is something that we need to be a little bit sceptical about.



RIGHT
1827 painting *The Captive Slave* by John Simpson

How much do you believe the British Empire's involvement in slavery has been fully addressed?

I don't have a satisfying answer to that question. I don't think so. I think it is good Britain is reckoning with its history and specifically its connections to transatlantic slavery in the 18th and 19th centuries. But reckoning with the legacies of transatlantic slavery means reckoning with the legacies of the entire British Empire; you can't have a modern Britain without the Empire, and you can't have imperial history without the history of plantation slavery. And I think that is an especially difficult and polarising culture war issue in Britain, specifically in 2023. And the question is all the more acute in a Britain that is much diminished in comparison to the Britain of, say, 1923. It's no longer the seat of a global empire and is in the midst of a catastrophic economic and political decline. I think the revival of apologies for the British Empire is something that is toxic and corrosive. Britain is shaped by the legacies of empire – demographically, economically and geographically. Thinking about the relationship between mass enslavement and the British Empire requires a subtlety that is hard to produce in public arguments.

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THE EMPIRE ABROAD

Discover more about the legacy of the British Empire at these historic sites

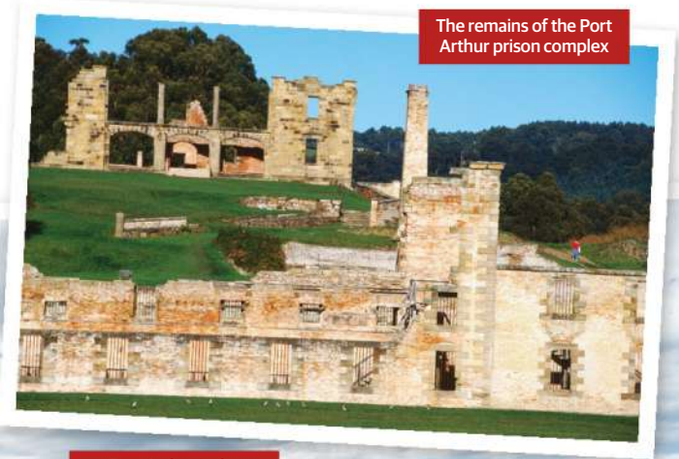
© Getty Images

1 PORT ARTHUR
TASMANIA, AUSTRALIA

During the heyday of the British Empire, Australia was a notorious penal colony. Between 1788 and 1868 more than 162,000 people convicted of a variety of crimes were sentenced to transportation to be used as slave labour. From 1833 to 1877 many of them would have been sent to Port Arthur in Tasmania. This was an infamous and cruel prison complex where inmates were put to work in the production of ships, steel, bricks and a variety of other items.

Visitors can participate in a variety of tours, including an 'escape from Port Arthur' tour (which details some of the escape attempts made by various inmates) and a ghost walk. Off the shore of Port Arthur is 'Isle of the Dead', a tiny island on which 1,000 inmates were buried. Guided tours of the island are given. The area is also famed for a remarkable natural cave. Port Arthur is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and is Australia's best-preserved convict site.

Open 9am-5pm. Adult tickets are $47 and children's are $22. Pre-booking is recommended.

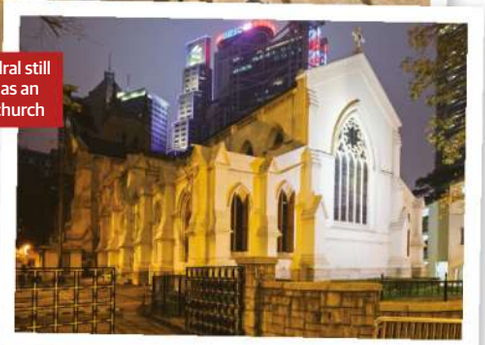


The remains of the Port Arthur prison complex

Port Arthur is the best-preserved of all of Australia's prison sites

2 ST JOHN'S CATHEDRAL
HONG KONG

The cathedral's 1941 Christmas Day service continued as Japanese forces shelled the island



The cathedral still operates as an Anglican church

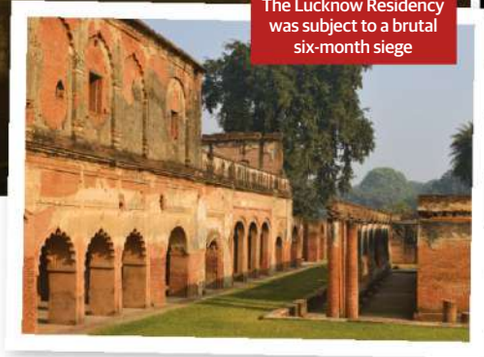
Hong Kong was first colonised by the British in 1841 and remained a British dependent territory until 1997, when it was returned to Chinese rule. The Cathedral of St John, one of the oldest churches in Hong Kong, was opened in 1849 and was formally consecrated in 1852.

The cathedral also has some fascinating history relating to World War II. During the Japanese occupation, the cathedral was used as a social club and when British rule was restored at the end of the conflict it was discovered that the building had sustained a large amount of damage. Repairs were undertaken using materials taken from a Royal Navy ship scuttled off the coast during the war.

In Hong Kong, the government owns all the land and leases it to various business and property owners. However, the cathedral has the distinction of being the only building on privately held land on the entire island. The church still operates to this day.

The cathedral is open seven days a week from 7am-6pm and admission is free.

Lucknow Residency was built between 1780-1800



The Lucknow Residency was subject to a brutal six-month siege

3 LUCKNOW RESIDENCY
LUCKNOW, INDIA

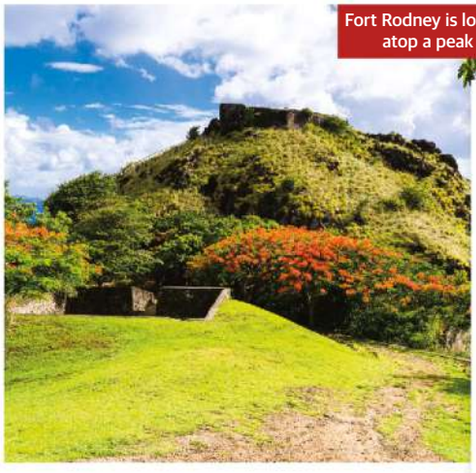
The Lucknow Residency was once the official headquarters of the British forces in Lucknow, Northern India, and was the site of a six-month siege during the Indian Mutiny. The ruins of the residency, along with damage caused during the siege, can still be seen today.

The residency is famed for events that occurred between 25 May and 27 November 1857, when it was besieged during the mutiny. Among the occupants of Lucknow was Sir Henry Lawrence, then governor-general's agent, chief commissioner and a renowned administrator. Lawrence was disturbed to discover he only had one full regiment to defend the residency and immediately set about fortifying as word of the mutiny spread. When the siege began there were some 3,000 people inside, a mixture of combatants and noncombatants and a number of women and children. On 25 September an attempt to lift the siege was made but the force was so crippled by the time it arrived that they were forced to join the garrison. A second force arrived on 16 November and by the 27th had been able to fully evacuate those inside. Lawrence, however, had died on 4 July.

The graves of around 2,000 soldiers killed in the mutiny are located in the complex. As well as preserving the original site, the Lucknow Residency also has a small museum.

Open seven days a week, 7am-6pm. Ticket prices vary.

4 FORT RODNEY AND SIGNAL HILL
PIGEON ISLAND, ST LUCIA



Fort Rodney is located high atop a peak in St Lucia

Constructed in 1778 by Admiral George Brydges Rodney following the invasion of St Lucia in the same year, Fort Rodney and Signal Hill are two fortifications located in Pigeon Island National Park.

Britain and France disputed ownership of St Lucia for two centuries, until it was finally ceded to the British in 1814 for the last time. Following the British invasion of 1778 impressive fortifications were constructed around the island, including a naval base at Gros Islet. The fortifications on Pigeon Island provided an excellent spot from which the French colonies on Martinique could be observed.

Fort Rodney is one of a number of fortifications on the island and both it and Signal Hill are located at the summit of sharp peaks. In the years since its desertion Fort Rodney has fallen into ruin. A short walk along the coast towards the south leads to a cemetery, where the British servicemen who died on St Lucia are buried.

For more information on Pigeon Island National Park, visit saintlucianationaltrust.com

5 HISTORIC JAMESTOWNE
VIRGINIA, UNITED STATES

Jamestowne, named in honour of King James I, was the site of the first permanent British settlement in North America. The colonists arrived in 1607 in an area chosen for its defensibility and for the fact that no indigenous settlements were nearby. The settlement was funded by the Virginia Company.

However, relations with the indigenous Algonquian people soured and in the three years following their initial arrival, the colony fell into disrepair. In the years after, the colony once again began to prosper and it became a profitable tobacco plantation.

Following problems wrought by the harsh treatment of the indigenous population, a rebellion by Nathaniel Bacon and a fire, Jamestowne ceased being a town in 1698. It would still be populated for years to come, but to a much lesser degree.

Jamestowne is preserved by both the National Park Service and Preservation Virginia. Archaeological sites, including James Fort, can be visited and walking tours are available. The archeological museum has a number of exhibitions and galleries exploring the history of the historic site.

Open daily 9am-5pm. Adult tickets $30, under 15s are free.

Waterfront excavations at historic Jamestowne, Virginia

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Illustration by:
Kevin McGivern

Catherine the Tyrant?

How Russia's 'Great' enlightened empress crushed opposition and her neighbours

Written by Virginia Rounding

The woman who became Catherine II, the Great, Empress of all the Russias, from 1762 to 1796, was born Sophie Frederica Auguste in the Baltic port of Stettin in Pomerania (now Szczecin in Poland) on 21 April (in the Julian calendar) 1729. She was the first child of 39-year-old Prince Christian August of Anhalt-Zerbst and his 17-year-old wife, Princess Johanna Elizabeth of Holstein-Gottorp. Anhalt-Zerbst and Holstein-Gottorp were two of the 300 or so tiny sovereign states, or principalities, of which the area roughly covered by present-day Germany consisted in the 18th century.

Among the noble families of these endlessly subdividing states, referred to by Russian historian VO Klyuchevsky as an "ancient feudal anthill", everyone seemed related to everyone else. Even the occupant of the Russian throne, Empress Elizabeth, was a family connection. She had once been engaged to marry Johanna's elder brother, but he had died of smallpox before the wedding could take place. Johanna took care to cultivate this connection and, on New Year's Day 1744, that cultivation appeared to have paid off when Sophie and her mother were summoned to Russia by the empress. The (unspoken) reason for the summons was that Sophie was being considered as a potential bride for Elizabeth's newly appointed heir, her nephew Grand Duke Peter – who also happened to be Sophie's second cousin.

The rise to power

The 15-year-old Peter was not a happy young man. He felt lonely and bullied at Elizabeth's court, with little enthusiasm for Russia or for the prospect of ruling it. To begin with, Sophie's advent must have seemed a welcome diversion, for here was a companion of near his own age, from a background similar to his. Unfortunately, she rapidly outstripped him; her quickness of mind and innate political sense meant she fitted in at court far more easily than Peter. She succeeded in gaining the empress's approval and was, after a few months' instruction, admitted into the Russian Orthodox Church with the new name of Ekaterina (Catherine) Alexeyevna, betrothed to Peter, and made a grand duchess. The two young people were married a year later, on 21 August 1745.

> "Her quickness of mind and innate political sense meant she fitted in at court far more easily than Peter"

The marriage was not consummated on their wedding night, nor for many years afterwards. In her memoirs, Catherine portrayed Peter as more interested in playing with his toy soldiers than in making love to her. Before long, even the mild friendship they had for one another wore off. Both – eventually – learned the facts of life from other partners and, at last, on 20 September 1754 Catherine produced a son, Paul, whom it suited everyone to regard as legitimate.

Circumstantial evidence, including his appearance and aspects of his character, suggest that Paul was indeed Peter's son (as he believed himself to be), but there is a possibility that his father was actually a young courtier called Sergei Saltykov. The Empress Elizabeth never admitted to any doubts on the matter, and bore the baby away as soon as he had been born, claiming him as a future occupant of the Russian throne.

Catherine experienced a severe and prolonged depression after Paul's birth and, by the time she finally reappeared in public, she was a changed person. She had realised during those long months of seclusion that she would have to create her own destiny in Russia. She spent the next few years quietly plotting, building up a comprehensive network of spies around the court, building relationships wherever they might prove useful – including with the British ambassador, Sir Charles Hanbury-Williams. Both she and Hanbury-Williams were convinced that Peter would make a hopeless tsar, and that Catherine herself ought to seize the throne

"Catherine portrayed Peter as more interested in playing with his toy soldiers than in making love to her"

LEFT Catherine managed to successfully lead a coup to overthrow her husband with the support of Russian nobles

ABOVE Catherine II in her coronation robe as she became empress

ABOVE-INSET The imperial crown of Catherine the Great was made for her and used by tsars until their overthrow in 1917

– or at the very least that she should be the real ruler, while Peter would be tsar in name only.

For some years Catherine enjoyed a romantic relationship with a young Polish nobleman, Stanisłas Poniatowski (also a friend of the British ambassador). He was succeeded in her affections by Lieutenant Grigory Orlov of the Izmailovsky Guards, one of five strapping brothers. With this liaison, and the all-important link to the influential Guards regiments, what may have previously appeared theoretical became a very practical possibility. From handwritten notes Catherine compiled in 1761 it is clear that, as Elizabeth drew nearer to the end of her life and Peter continued to be seen in many quarters as unsatisfactory to be a future emperor, she herself was studying, thinking and planning how best to exercise power once it came her way.

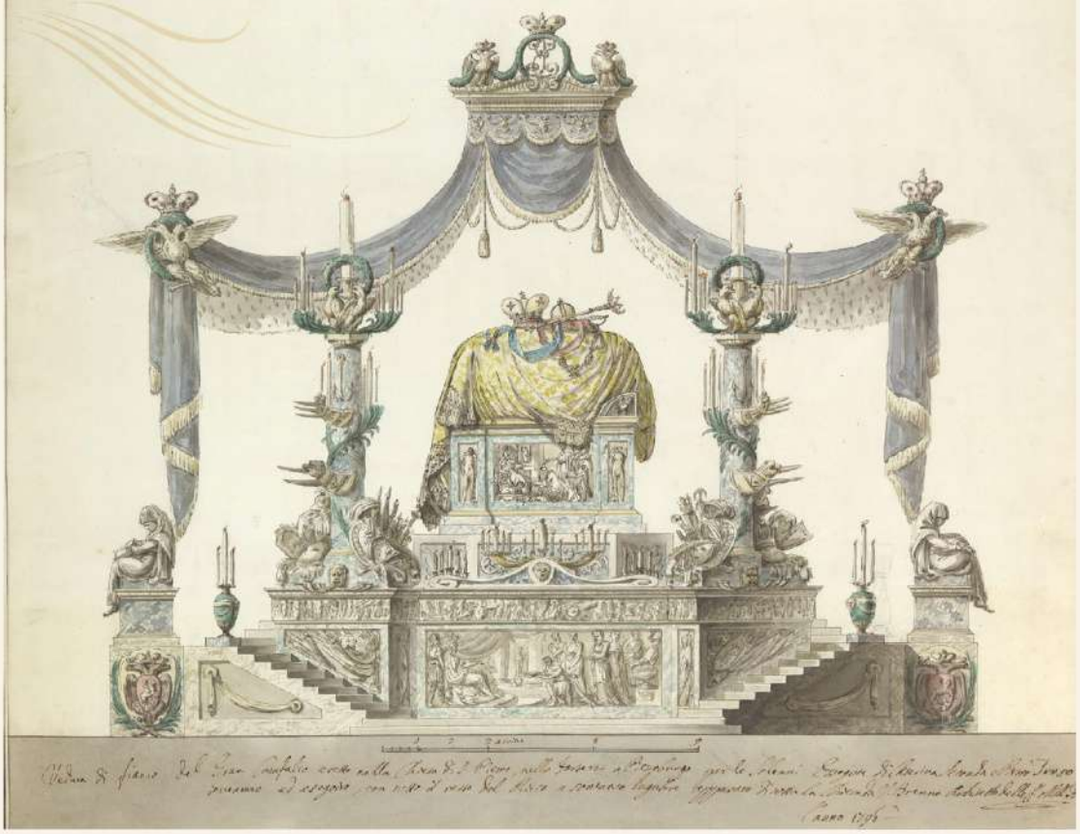
When Elizabeth did eventually die, on 25 December 1761, Catherine's position was complicated by the fact that she was five months' pregnant by Orlov. Her relationship with her husband had by now deteriorated to such an extent that there could be no question of convincing him or anyone else that the child might be his, so concealment of the pregnancy was her only option. Peter duly took the oath as Emperor Peter III.

The Last Word

Empress Catherine made sure to chronicle her legacy

Clearly not waiting for history to make up its mind about her reign or legacy, Catherine II took it upon herself to craft an epitaph in 1778, nearly 20 years before her death. This epitaph on herself was modelled on the one written for her greyhound Sir Tom Anderson and reads as follows:

"Here lies Catherine the Second, born in Stettin on 21st April [2nd May] 1729. She came to Russia in 1744 to marry Peter III. At the age of fourteen she formed the threefold project of pleasing her husband, Elizabeth and the nation. She neglected nothing to succeed in this. Eighteen years of boredom and solitude made her read plenty of books. Arrived on the throne of Russia, she desired its good and sought to procure for her subjects happiness, liberty and propriety. She forgave easily and hated no one; indulgent, easy to live with, naturally cheerful, with a republican soul and a good heart, she had friends: she found work easy, she liked good society and the arts."



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Despite this apparently smooth transition of power, Peter's reign quickly came to grief. With little political sense, he tried to introduce changes too fast and with no consultation, and ended up alienating both the Church and the army, vital pillars for any ruler. He also unwittingly galvanised Catherine and her supporters into seizing power by making it clear that he would quite like to dispose of her in favour of his long-term mistress.

Rumours reached Peter that a coup was being planned, but he took no notice and continued to amuse himself much as he had in the days when he was grand duke. The coup took place on 28 June 1762, and began with Grigory Orlov's younger brother Alexei entering Catherine's bedroom in the early hours to announce calmly: "All is ready for the proclamation; you must get up."

On this day Catherine created an enduring image of herself as the powerful and charismatic leader of the nation, riding at the head of between 14,000 and 20,000 men. Instituting herself as colonel of the Preobrazhensky Guards, she donned the Guards' green and red uniform and mounted her grey thoroughbred stallion Brilliant, sabre in hand and with oak leaves adorning her tricorn hat. The first manifesto announcing the change of ruler justified her accession by claims that Peter had endangered Orthodoxy, sullied Russia's military glory and undermined the empire's institutions. Catherine, it was implied, had come to restore everything to its rightful place.

Catherine The Collector

The urge to collect, to acquire, was one of Catherine's defining characteristics and it can be seen running throughout all of her activities. She was an avid consumer – of ideas, artworks, territory and people.

The ideas and maxims Catherine collected and wrote down for herself during her years as a grand duchess, as part of her preparation for power, were not original – they came from her reading of Montesquieu and others – but her notes demonstrate her powers of assimilation and organisation, and her attempt to apply general concepts to the particular situation and country in which she found herself. Some of the precepts she lists are written as little homilies to herself, summarising the qualities required in a perfect ruler. Her notes also

demonstrate her fundamental belief, characteristic of the Enlightenment philosophers she spent much time reading, that, through the application of reason, solutions to most human problems can and must be found.

Catherine's activities as an art collector began early in her reign, with the purchase in 1764 of 225 Old Master paintings from the Berlin dealer Johann Gotzkowski. They were mainly by Flemish and Dutch masters, and had originally been accumulated for Frederick the Great, but at the end of the Seven Years' War the economic situation in Prussia was such that he was in no position to buy them. Catherine's aim in purchasing them was as much political as artistic, intended to demonstrate Russia's superiority to the whole of Europe. Peter the Great and Elizabeth had both collected some artworks, but it was with Catherine that systematic collection began, and it was with this first major purchase that the great collection that came to be synonymous with the word 'Hermitage' was born. Her technique was often to buy in bulk in this way, seizing opportunities – flagged up to her by her ambassadors and other representatives around Europe – when previous owners of collections needed to make a quick sale. In 1769 she acquired a major haul of over 600 paintings and 1,000 drawings, including a large group of Poussins, many Rembrandts, works by Paolo Veronese and Titian, and a large number of engravings, all previously belonging to Count Heinrich von Brühl. A purchase that gave rise to some consternation in England took place a decade later when Catherine entered into negotiations with the third earl of Orford over the purchase of paintings belonging to his late grandfather, Sir Robert Walpole, acquired for his gallery at Houghton Hall. Catherine eventually purchased 204 of these paintings for the relative bargain price of £40,000. A frigate was then sent from St Petersburg to collect them in August 1779.

"Catherine's activities as an art collector began early in her reign"

The Apotheosis of the Reign of Catherine II by Gregorio Guglielmi

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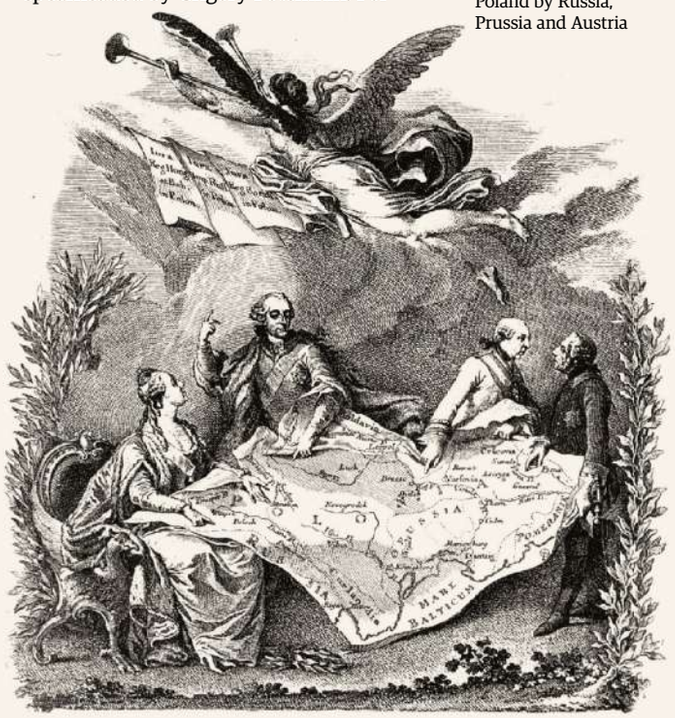
ABOVE Flintlock pistols that were owned by Catherine

Of more consequence to the balance of power in Europe was Catherine's urge to acquire territory, which she approached in as wholesale a way as she did the acquisition of art. One of the main victims was Poland, which, by the end of her reign, had been partitioned out of existence (Prussia and Austria being fellow beneficiaries of Russia in the deals – though not doing so well out of them). Catherine's machinations began in September 1763 when the death of King Augustus III of Poland provoked excitement among the various European rulers who wished to extend their influence in that country. Her ingenious tactic was to get her former lover Stanisław Poniatowski installed as king, knowing he would be dependent on her and unable to resist her ultimate plans for his country. Early in 1772 Russia renewed its alliance with Prussia, the two countries agreeing a convention that specified the shares of Polish territory they were to award themselves. A treaty leading to the first partition of Poland was signed on 17 February, with Austria joining in the agreement over the partition in March.

The other main target of Catherine's territorial expansion was the Ottoman Empire. The first Russo-Turkish war of her reign broke out in 1768, unrest in Poland having spread into Turkey in the form of a group of Cossacks who sacked a small frontier town and massacred its Jews. In retaliation, the Turks declared war by imprisoning the Russian ambassador in Constantinople. Three-and-a-half years of mutual slaughter followed, in which the Turks came off worst.

A seed planted in Catherine's mind during this first conflict with Turkey developed into her so-called 'Greek project' – a plan to recreate the Byzantine Empire under Russian domination (the naming of her second grandson Constantine was no accident). The plan would involve expansion southwards, which in turn would mean rapprochement with Austria, demonstrated by her cultivation of Emperor Joseph II.

Major expansion southwards, into Crimea, duly took place in 1783, spearheaded by Grigory Potemkin. For two years Potemkin had been Catherine's lover. Theirs was a tempestuous relationship, necessary to them both, but full of door-slamming and tears as well as of passionate love. The solution to what was essentially a power struggle involved Potemkin becoming her representative in the south. Internationally, the time seemed right, as France and Britain, preoccupied with the War of American Independence, did not have the resources to interfere with Russia's expansionist plans. So Potemkin secured the annexation in July 1783. In the following February, Catherine appointed him governor general of the new province of the Tauride, which incorporated the former Crimean khanate.



BELOW A satirical engraving depicting the division of Poland by Russia, Prussia and Austria

She visited her newly acquired lands in Crimea in 1787, travelling via Smolensk and Kiev, and meeting with Joseph II en route. It was during this great voyage, by flotilla down the Dnieper, that the term 'Potemkin villages' came into being, as groups of well-rehearsed peasants were assembled to greet the empress as she sailed by their newly founded picturesque settlements. But this was not all pretence, even if it was arranged at speed, and the empress was fully complicit in the image creation devised by Potemkin.

Six months later, the Ottoman Empire reacted to Russian expansion by again declaring war. During this second Russo-Turkish war, the Poles made an attempt to break free of Russian influence by pushing through a new constitution. Such a move did not find favour with Catherine who, at this stage in her life – old age combining with the French Revolution to drive this previously 'enlightened' monarch to a far more reactionary position – viewed any attempt at reform as a precursor to revolution. She was able to act against Poland in May 1792 when a group of Polish reactionaries appealed to her for assistance and Russian troops were deployed to

The Enlightened Despots

More believers in absolute rule and reform

Peter the Great

Reign: 1682 – 1725

Catherine picked up the legacy of reform that Peter started after he gained sole control of the Russian Empire. In desperate need of modernisation, he led the charge of westernising Russia's civil service and economy. This brought in more money, which also helped to fund his military campaigns.

Frederick the Great of Prussia

Reign: 1740-86

One of the great advocates of Enlightened Absolutism and the idea that monarchs ruled not through divine right but a social contract of betterment for their people, Frederick II wrote an essay defending the concept. He greatly expanded Prussia's borders while also investing heavily in the arts and education.

"By the end of her reign, Poland had been partitioned out of existence"

overcome the resistance that helped justify their intervention (a technique which may sound familiar). Now came the second partition of Poland, shared between Russia and Prussia, the deal giving Russia most of eastern Poland. The third partition quickly followed (in suppression of an insurrection against the Russian plenipotentiary in March 1794), and by the end of the year the name of Poland had been removed from the map of Europe.

Was she 'enlightened'?

There are a number of factors that can be placed in the positive column for Catherine as an enlightened ruler. She was an excellent manager and 'boss'; one of her maxims being that praise should be uttered in public but rebuke in private. She told her procurator-general on his appointment: "If I see that you are loyal, hard-working, open and sincere, then you can be assured of my unbounded confidence. Above all I love the truth, and you must feel free to say it, without fear; you can argue with me without danger, provided that the end result is good." The result was a court and entourage that was remarkably free of fear; such an attitude was a first (and, arguably, last) among Russian rulers. She treated all the young men who became her 'favourites' with kindness and generosity, even when they betrayed her with other women.

A few months after her accession Catherine issued secret orders that torture

RIGHT Catherine lays the trophies of the Battle of Chesma (1770) on the tomb of Peter the Great

BELOW The Battle of Chesma was a key naval victory for the Russian fleet over the Ottomans in the Russo-Turkish War

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Maria Theresa

Reign: 1743-80

The Queen of Bohemia who also served as Holy Roman Empress to her husband Francis I, Maria Theresa was not a devout believer in enlightened despotism, but her reforms to the civil service and military of Austria during her reign proved to be significant, as did the introduction of a national education system.

Charles III of Spain

Reign: 1759-88

While Charles III brought through economic reforms to modernise his country, his desire to hold on to its colonial assets and combat rivals overseas, most notably the growing British Empire, hampered some of the progress. He secretly backed the American Revolution but was slow to recognise its independence.

Mahmud II

Reign: 1808-39

With the Ottoman Empire stagnant for years and more recently rejecting the Enlightenment as blasphemous and heretical, Mahmud II was the first to successfully drive his realm into the modern world. He convinced more conservative voices to accept change as the empire reorganised itself.

PRUSSIA.
RUSSIA.
Never fear - I'll give her her Belly full - I will put in some Strokes shall satisfy her -
I can't do a good deal - I don't mean you Lanky - I am old and tuff - I must leave a Turk standing
The cursed Revolution has made Neutrals of us
FRANCE & SPAIN.
POLAND.
Destruction of
ALLIES attempting to tame Imperial KATE, or, The

ABOVE-LEFT A cartoon depicting Catherine taking on Frederick William II of Prussia, who was looking to tame the imperial expansion of the empress

ABOVE-RIGHT Portrait of Catherine the Great from around 1780, with her rule well-established

LEFT A fireworks display celebrating the rule of Catherine II in 1787

was to be used only very sparingly, in order not to let the innocent suffer. It was also by her instruction that the rebel Pugachev was not quartered before being executed (much to the disappointment of the watching crowd).

She founded schools (notably the Smolny Institute for the education of girls) and hospitals, including homes for foundlings and 'lying-in' hospitals for unmarried and destitute mothers. It was not her fault that there was an alarmingly high mortality rate in the foundling homes, which came to be known as 'angel factories'.

She compiled a *Great Instruction*, or *Nakaz*, a compendium of general principles on which good government and an orderly society should be based. This was read out as a preamble to the meetings of the Legislative Commission, summoned by Catherine to attempt a codification of laws.

She strived to improve local government, dividing Russia into provinces to be managed by governors-general appointed by herself, reforming the penal system and arranging for the establishment of schools.

She believed in religious tolerance, remarking to two of her companions during the voyage to Crimea: "You are in the midst of a people conquered by my arms; I want their laws, their religion, their customs and their prejudices to be respected."

At least until the events of the French Revolution undermined her previously positive view of the Enlightenment philosophers, Catherine gave generous support to such luminaries as Voltaire and Diderot. In the case of the latter, she purchased his library, then paid him a salary to look after it.

She did at least consider the question of serfdom, writing a note for herself while still a grand duchess that: "It is against the Christian religion and justice to make slaves of men (who are all born free)."

However, there are also some factors that can be held against her. Her sentiment about the injustice of serfdom remained only theoretical – it was another 100 years before Catherine's great-grandson, Alexander II, liberated the serfs.

There is also the fact that, however she sought to justify the action as beneficial to Russia, she did technically usurp the throne and may have been at least passively involved in the subsequent assassination of her husband, Tsar Peter III. She also authorised the assassination of her other rival, Ivan VI, who had been deposed as an infant by the Empress Elizabeth.

Whatever her own inclinations against torture and exemplary punishment, she was not always able to prevent it. For instance, retribution after the Pugachev rebellion was savage, involving mass executions and floggings. This was under the auspices of one of her officials, Peter Panin, rather than Catherine herself, but she did authorise his appointment.

In her later years, she rowed back on her former qualified support for independent thought and writing, her last significant piece of legislation being to revoke the right of individuals to operate private printing presses.

Finally, her basic attitude towards possessions, whether objects, people or territory, was that if she wanted something, she would have it.

What can't be doubted is that she firmly believed all her political actions were taken for the good of her empire and people (and that her personal actions were her own affair). Her reputation as a debauched woman with a voracious sexual appetite was more the stuff of jealous rumour and gutter journalism than based on reality. She had a few deeply passionate and loving relationships, while with some of her young favourites she appeared more interested in educating them than in sleeping with them. She adored her grandchildren, but had a terrible relationship with her son – which is one reason why so much of her legacy, particularly in terms of the civilised atmosphere predominant at her court, was lost on her death.

Catherine was always infuriated when foreigners accused Russia of 'backwardness' – perhaps partly because in some respects she agreed with them. She exerted all her efforts to bring Russia into the centre of the European stage, as an equal (if not more than equal) partner with the other European powers, determined that there should be no justification for her empire to be looked down on or not taken seriously. At the high points of her reign, it looked as though she had succeeded. She would not be alone among Russian rulers in being unable to effect quite the transformation she had envisaged.

> *"Catherine firmly believed that all her political actions were taken for the good of her empire"*

Age of Uprising

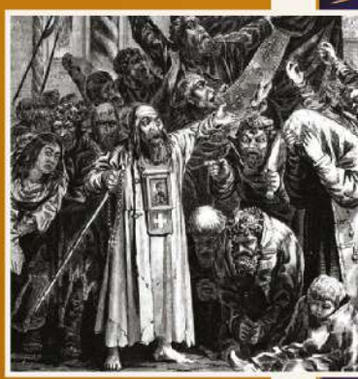
Some of the rebellions during the reign of Catherine II

Bar Confederation (1768-72)

Set up by Polish nobles to defend the sovereignty of Poland from Russian rule, the Bar Confederation formed after Russia blocked state reforms in the country. A series of uprisings followed, turning into a civil war and ultimately the First Partition of Poland.

Moscow Plague Riot (1771)

After plague spread among troops fighting for Russia against the Ottoman Empire in Moldova, it reached Moscow around February 1771, with c.100,000 people perishing. The city was quarantined, trapping the poor but with rich nobles escaping, leading to riots by those left behind.



Pugachev's Rebellion (1773-75)

Discontent among serfs over rising taxes and Catherine's rule was consolidated around a rumour that Peter III lived and was primed to reclaim the throne, emancipating the serfs in turn. In fact 'Peter' was Cossack Emilian Pugachev who rose up at the head of a rebel army until he was caught an executed.

Kosciuszko Uprising (1794)

Following a Second Partition of Poland, Tadeusz Kościuszko led an uprising in defence of Polish sovereignty and a new constitution introduced – but blocked – in 1791. Prussia and Russia put down the uprising, leading to the massacre of Praga and Kościuszko's capture.

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Gangs of New York

In 19th century New York City, the impoverished Five Points area was a battleground for rival thugs

Written by Callum McKelvie

EXPERT BIO

© Wilbur Miller

WILBUR MILLER

Wilbur Miller is an emeritus professor at Stony Brook University, New York. He is the editor of the five-volume encyclopaedia *The Social History of Crime and Punishment in America* (2012) and the author of *Cops and Bobbies* (1977), *Revenuers and Moonshiners* (1991) and *A History of Private Policing in the United States* (2019).

New York. From Brooklyn to the Bronx, the great city is a hive of culture and considered by many to be the very heart of America itself. However, in the 19th century it was a different world to the bustling metropolis we know today. In that century, one area in particular known as the Five Points in Lower Manhattan had a reputation as a poverty-stricken nightmare of vice and criminality. European immigrants who had fled to America seeking a better life ended up living in squalor within its streets. Yet, for all the tales of destitution and corruption, it is for the fearsome gangs that stalked its alleys and saloons that the Five Points remains notorious. With names such as Bowery Boys and the Whyos, they were said to have flamboyant dress senses and a taste for violence. Much about them remains unknown, with historians disagreeing about events and in some cases whether specific gangs even existed at all. So just who were the real gangs of New York?

The Five Points earned its name due to the fact it centred on the intersection of three streets, which formed five corners, or 'points'. This notorious den of squalor was built on top of a pond that was known as the Collect. Over time, the Collect had become increasingly contaminated with filth and was filled in with dirt. As a result the houses often sank at odd angles and disease was a regular occurrence. Charles Dickens, who visited the area during a five-month tour of North America in 1841, noted that "poverty, vice and wretchedness are rife enough" and that "here too are lanes and alleys, paved with mud knee deep, underground chambers where they dance and game... all that is loathsome, drooping and decayed is here." Yet any visitor hoping to follow in Dickens' footsteps will be sorely disappointed. "It is now covered over by court and other state and Federal buildings," explains Wilbur Miller, author of *The Social History of Crime and Punishment in America: An Encyclopedia*. "Columbus Park, built in the early 20th century, was constructed over Mulberry Bend, a particularly notorious part of the points."

Desperate immigrants, including many Irish who were fleeing to the New World to escape the hardships of the potato famine, made their way to New York. In fact, according to *The New York Times*, ▶

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by 1860, 69 percent of the city's voters were foreign-born. Many of these immigrants, unable to afford adequate housing, ended up in the Five Points. "It was very mixed," says Miller. "Most residents were Irish, but there were also African-American and Italian immigrant dwellers, as well as American-born workers."

Legends of the area's destitution began to spread, and with it tales of violence and crime. Some accounts state that 15 murders were committed in the Five Points every night, and the Old Brewery was said to have been witness to one homicide a day for 15 years. However, as with many impoverished areas, it's argued that the danger of the Five Points has been exaggerated. Historian Tyler Anbinder, who worked on revising the *Gangs of New York* (2002) film script, was quoted by *National Geographic* as stating: "I looked at the statistics, and other than public drunkenness and prostitution, there was no more crime in Five Points than in any other part of the city."

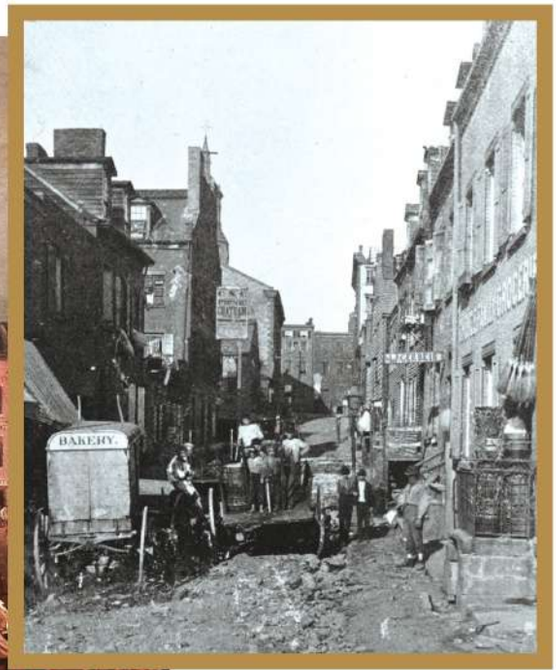
Perceived criminality aside, if the Five Points is remembered today, it is for its infamous gangs, each with their own colourful sense of dress and a formidable reputation. "Gangs offered a route of mobility, especially into politics," says Miller. "They provided outlets for young men (not teenagers) who were out of work or worked in occupations like butchers and had afternoons off after the morning markets." Unlike some gangs, many of the Five Points crews were more political in nature and although their activity was sometimes dubious, it was not strictly criminal. "They mostly engaged in turf fights with each other, serving as 'shoulder hitters' and 'repeaters' at elections, starting riots at elections," Miller explains. "Although sometimes gang members would beat and/or rob a well-dressed man who wandered into the wrong place."

However, the first gang known in the area, and perhaps even in New York itself, most certainly was criminal. The Forty Thieves began inauspiciously enough in the back rooms of a 'grocery' store. Opened by Rosanna Peers in 1825, the store was in fact a front for an illegal bar and soon became a favourite haunt for pickpockets, crooks and other villains. The Forty Thieves leader, Edward Coleman, formed the gang from the best scoundrels Peers had to offer. He was notoriously tough and enforced a strict quota system: members who were unable to return to the store with a specific value of stolen goods were quickly thrown out. Coleman had a separate business, recruiting attractive young women, known as 'hot corn girls', to sell corn on the street. His own wife was part of this racket but when she consistently failed to meet her targets, he beat her to death. Coleman was hanged for his crime in 1838, but the Forty Thieves continued. They were even said to have acquired and trained an offshoot group of child criminals, the Forty Little Thieves.

"The Forty Thieves were even said to have acquired and trained an offshoot group of child criminals, the Forty Little Thieves"

As a result of the high number of immigrants in the Five Points area, many of the gangs that were formed had predominantly Irish members. One of the first of these gangs was the Roche Guard. This group was formed at the beginning of the 1850s by saloon owner Walter Roche, though some sources state their leader was in fact called Ted Roach. Legend has often stated that another Irish group, the fearsome Dead Rabbits, was formed from wayward Roche gang members. As a result the two groups were deadly enemies. The Rabbits' distinctive name has a rather colourful history. "The Dead Rabbits were said to carry a dead rabbit hanging from a pole," Miller tells us. But despite the folklore surrounding the gang, there is now a question as to whether the Dead Rabbits existed at all. Anbinder says there is little evidence that the gang existed and posits that 'Dead

BELOW An 1857 sketch of a member of the so-called Dead Rabbits gang



ABOVE Charles Dickens visited the Five Points in 1841 and commented on the poverty he witnessed

LEFT The Five Points area of New York was home to many notorious gangs

A contemporary depiction of the 1857 riots between the Dead Rabbits and the Bowery Boys

Rabbits' may have been a nickname used by the Bowery Boys to demean Irish gangs.

Who were the Bowery Boys? Only the most infamous of the Five Points gangs. Although the name was applied to a variety of groups at different times, they all appear to have had a Nativist ideology, which was staunchly anti-immigrant and anti-Catholic. In his book *The Bowery Boys: Street Corner Radicals and the Politics of Rebellion*, historian Peter Adams states that many belonged to professions such as shipbuilders, carpenters, butchers and printers. The Bowery Boys were noted for wearing stovepipe hats and, particularly in later years, their increasingly dapper style of dress. Adams notes that a haircut described as short at the back, slicked down at the front and with distinctive ringlets pasted down in front of the ears (known as 'soap locks') became a characteristic Bowery Boy look. "The gangs often affected the dress, swagger and slang of the Bowery B'hoy, a type who became a celebrated stage character 'Mose' who is an urban version of the American 'tall tale' tradition like Paul Bunyan or Pecos Bill," says Miller.

The man most associated with the Bowery Boys is without a doubt Bill 'The Butcher' Poole, memorably portrayed by Daniel Day-Lewis in Martin Scorsese's *Gangs of New York*. Of the real Poole, much is shrouded in mystery and there are a number of conflicting accounts of his life. Born on 24 July 1821 in New Jersey, Bill was ten years old when his family moved to New York City. His father owned a butcher's shop and the young man soon followed in his footsteps. Under his rule, the Bowery Boys clashed frequently with their Irish rivals the Dead Rabbits. Poole enforced the Nativists' cause during elections and became known as a particularly vicious fighter.

By 1855 Poole had become the leader of the political movement the Know Nothings. Tom Hyer, who headed up the Know

Draft Riots

For four nights in 1863, New York City erupted into violence and bloodshed

Between 11-14 July 1863, angry New Yorkers took to the streets to oppose the Civil War draft. As the bloody conflict between the North and the South raged on, New Yorkers' faced new strict laws in the effort to find men to join the fight. However, affluent draftees could, for the princely sum of $300, avoid being conscripted. This caused widespread discontent among the working population. For many, $300 was an entire year's wages and they were angered by the blatant inequality.

Black people became the target of much of the violence. President Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation in September 1862 had caused anger in New York, where some did not wish to see slavery abolished but wanted to preserve the Union. Many who were against the war feared that emancipation of the slaves would cause mass unemployment among the impoverished whites in the city. What's more, as Black men were not considered American citizens, they were exempt from the draft. At one point during the carnage a group of rioters descended on an African-American orphanage housing some 200 children.

The riot was eventually quelled and the draft went ahead as planned. The resultant damage from the disorder is said to have cost some $1,500,000.

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The Legend of Piker Ryan

This vicious criminal was rumoured to charge $15 to chew off a man's ear

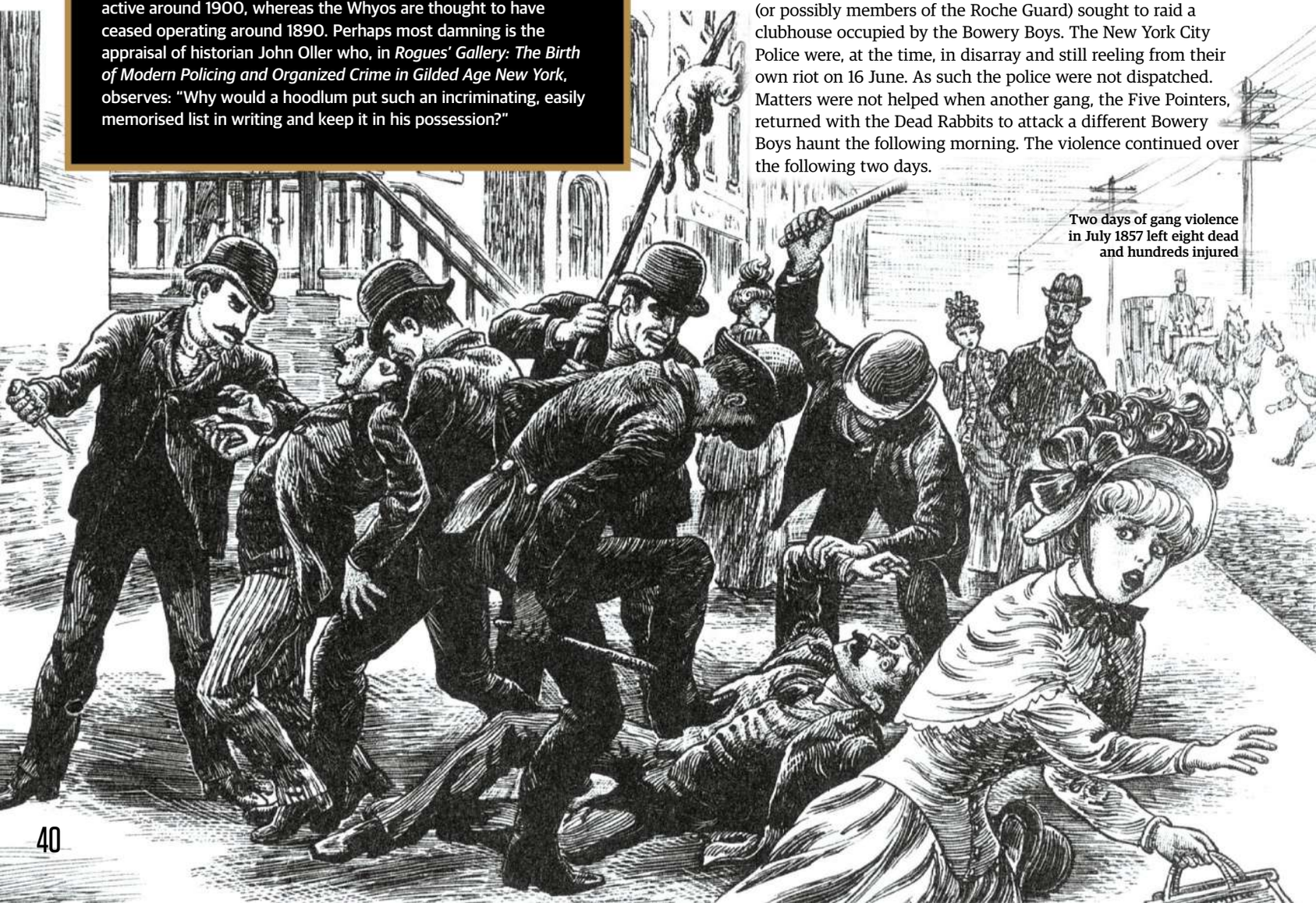
As with other gangs, legends of the Whyos' ferocity were perpetuated by Herbert Asbury in his 1928 book *The Gangs of New York*. One member of the gang, known as Piker Ryan, became infamous after he purportedly listed the prices he would charge for certain hit jobs. These ranged from punching a man for $2 to shooting them in the leg for $25. One of the most notorious was his offer to chew off a man's ear for $15. Ryan was said to have kept a list of the various attacks he had undertaken.

However, as with a number of his claims, questions have been raised about Asbury's stories of Piker Ryan. For example, he includes what he claims is a picture of the notorious criminal – in fact it's of a different gentleman, Patrick Ryan, who had nothing to do with the Whyos. Asbury also notes that Piker Ryan was active around 1900, whereas the Whyos are thought to have ceased operating around 1890. Perhaps most damning is the appraisal of historian John Oller who, in *Rogues' Gallery: The Birth of Modern Policing and Organized Crime in Gilded Age New York*, observes: "Why would a hoodlum put such an incriminating, easily memorised list in writing and keep it in his possession?"

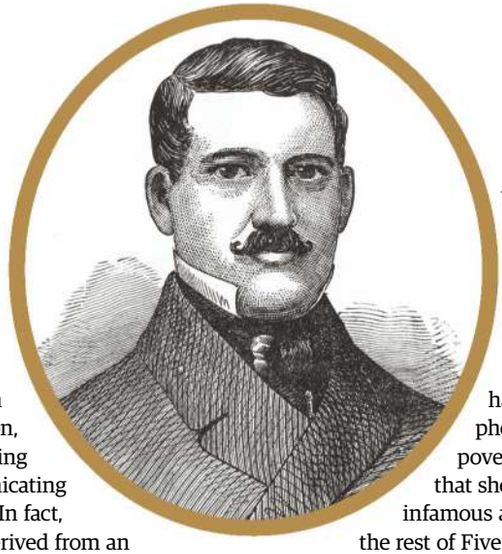
Nothings' sporting fraternity, got into an altercation with a rival political group that led to increasing animosity between them. On 18 February this would result in Poole being shot during a bar fight. Herbert Asbury, the author of the *The Gangs of New York*, stated: "Poole lived for 14 days after the shooting, to the vast amazement of his doctors who declared vehemently that it was unnatural for a man to live so long with a bullet in his heart." But even Poole was not invincible and on 8 March he finally succumbed to his wounds. Purportedly his final words were: "Good-bye boys, I die a true American!"

Despite his notoriety, Poole was not the only leader of the Bowery Boys, and one faction under the direction of Mike Walsh became a political force to be reckoned with. At one point, Walsh's Bowery Boys were so powerful that they were even able to provide the bail for their leader when he was arrested and sent to jail for a second time. In 1839, Walsh's political skill paid off and he was elected to the state assembly. In 1843 he founded the Spartan Association, described by author Luc Sante as being "equally of the political club, the fraternal order, and the gang, although it had... a deliberately proletarian cast to it." The Association was a formidable force that used brute strength to attack Whig headquarters and even storm the stage at Tammany Hall, one of the political centres in the city.

Other Bowery Boys groups were content to protect their turf and pick fights with their enemies the Dead Rabbits. The two gangs clashed regularly but on 4 July 1857 they had their most infamous skirmish, resulting in a riot, eight deaths and hundreds of injuries. The violence began when the Dead Rabbits (or possibly members of the Roche Guard) sought to raid a clubhouse occupied by the Bowery Boys. The New York City Police were, at the time, in disarray and still reeling from their own riot on 16 June. As such the police were not dispatched. Matters were not helped when another gang, the Five Pointers, returned with the Dead Rabbits to attack a different Bowery Boys haunt the following morning. The violence continued over the following two days.



Two days of gang violence in July 1857 left eight dead and hundreds injured



LEFT
Bill 'The Butcher' Poole, the infamous leader of the Bowery Boys

While the Bowery Boys and the Dead Rabbits were content to engage in street violence, a new gang with an even more fearsome reputation quickly became the most prominent in the Five Points. The Whyos were formed at some point in the 1860s and dabbled in crimes far more serious than their predecessors, including prostitution, racketeering and counterfeiting. According to Miller, they were known for communicating via a variety of bird and animal noises. In fact, the name 'Whyo' was intended to be derived from an owl's distinctive 'hoo-hoo'.

At one point the gang was led by Danny Driscoll and Danny Lyons. Driscoll met his end after accidentally shooting his friend Bridget Garrity, having intended to murder his rival John McGarty instead. However, the remnants of the Whyos were not kept idle for long. The enterprising Paul Kelly incorporated them, as well as any leftovers from other gangs, into a new group called the Five Points Gang. With a primarily Italian and Italian-American membership, Kelly's operation was immensely successful and he is said to have commanded a crew of 1,500. According to historian Humbert S Nell, this powerful gang "literally controlled the area between the Bowery and Broadway, Fourteenth Street and City Hall Park". Reputedly, among Kelly's followers was an aspiring young crook called Al Capone.

Between 1898 and 1904 Kelly's gang fought for control of the area against the Eastman Gang, a predominantly Jewish gang led by Monk Eastman. Eastman was arrested and his successor Max Zwerbach was later killed by the Five Points Gang. With his own gang in disarray, Kelly was pressured to keep a low profile and eventually became a labour racketeer.

By now the Five Points area itself had begun to disintegrate. In the 1890s photographer Jacob Riis showcased the poverty of the Five Points in a series of images that shocked the general public. The most infamous area, Mulberry Bend, was demolished and the rest of Five Points was slowly replaced over time. Yet the legends of gangs such as the Bowery Boys and the Dead Rabbits continue to fascinate, primarily thanks to the work of one man – the aforementioned Herbert Asbury.

Born in 1891, Asbury had a prolific career as a journalist before he turned to long-form writing during the 1920s. Although he dabbled in fiction (including *The Devil of Pei-Ling*, which *The New Yorker* described as "a gory horror show") it was for his non-fiction that he was best known. In 1928 he authored *The Gangs of New York*, the book that Scorsese loosely adapted into the 2002 film. Although the book certainly remains an important source, historians have pointed out that there are obvious flaws in Asbury's presentation of the facts. In an interview with *Gotham Gazette*, Anbinder stated: "Asbury is very good at finding material. The problem is that he lacked judgement, so he missed obvious lies and falsehoods about the neighbourhood, and New York in general."

Yet thanks to Asbury the fascination with the gangs of 19th century New York City continues to this day. The hit movie, while largely fictionalised, presented these violent men to a whole new audience. Due to this and the work of numerous historians, the stories of these vicious gangs and their brutal battles continue to captivate and intrigue.

"The Bowery Boys were noted for wearing stovepipe hats and, particularly in later years, their increasingly dapper style of dress"

BELOW **The Bowery Boys were known for their dapper dress sense**

Martin Scorsese's 2002 film *Gangs of New York* drew attention to the 19th century gangs and was acclaimed for Daniel Day-Lewis' (centre) depiction of Bill 'The Butcher' Poole

All images: © Alamy, © Getty Images

MURASAKI SHIKIBU

The first novelist

Discover the mysterious Japanese noblewoman who penned a literary masterpiece

Written by Poppy-Jay St Palmer

Since the days of the earliest civilisations, storytelling has sat at the heart of communication. From tales depicted in cave paintings and hieroglyphics and passed down through the oral tradition all the way to the stories of television, cinema and even viral videos and Twitter threads, storytelling is a way of understanding the world and connecting to those around us and those living completely different lives to our own. Novels are one of the most accessible and popular methods of storytelling, but they didn't come onto the scene until the 11th century, when what is often considered to be the world's oldest novel came from an unlikely source. And like many of the world's greatest, largely anonymous innovations, it came from a woman: Japanese author Murasaki Shikibu.

You'd be forgiven for not knowing Lady Murasaki's name – even 'Lady Murasaki' is a pseudonym – as she lived during a time where the names of women were rarely recorded. Some might say she had storytelling in her blood. Born in the city now known as Kyoto in 973, she was the daughter of a scholar and the granddaughter of a famous poet. Through her upbringing she became very familiar with both Japanese and Chinese literature and poetry. During her lifetime, Japan was starting to become more isolated with the looming end of missions to China, and the country began to shape a stronger national cultural identity as a result. Japanese men continued to write formally in Chinese, but it was very unusual for a woman to do so. However, Murasaki succeeded in becoming fluent in the language, and her exposure to the arts from both countries transformed her into something of a literary prodigy. Even her own academic father was shocked to learn how talented she was. She recorded his reaction in her diary: "'Just my luck,' he said, 'what a pity she was not born a man'."

Murasaki's creative tendencies developed at an early age: she dabbled in poetry in her youth, and used the art form to

> "Do they really look upon me as a dull thing, I wonder? I am what I am"

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record some of her life and experiences. Her poems blessed future scholars with a look at the ins and outs of her world, despite the fact that we still don't know her true name. Throughout her early life, she had very little contact with men apart from her father. It was typical for noblewomen of her status to marry upon reaching puberty, but Murasaki remained in her father's household into her mid-twenties, or perhaps even her early thirties. In 996, her father was posted to a four-year governorship in Echizen Province, and Murasaki decided to accompany him. But she returned after just two years to marry her father's friend Fujiwara no Nobutaka, a second cousin 20 years her senior. When they wed, Nobutaka had an unknown number of other wives, as well as various children to some of those wives. Murasaki added a daughter, Kenshi, to the brood when she was born in 999. However, Murasaki was left alone once more just two years later when Nobutaka died during a cholera epidemic.

Many would have expected Murasaki to seek out a new partner following her husband's death, but she once again defied expectations. Instead, she began work on *The Tale of Genji*, a story that would come to be considered as the greatest work of Japanese literature, as well as the world's first novel. *The Tale of Genji* follows the life of an imperial prince in the form of a sweeping and intricate romantic saga. It was quite unlike anything anyone had ever written before.

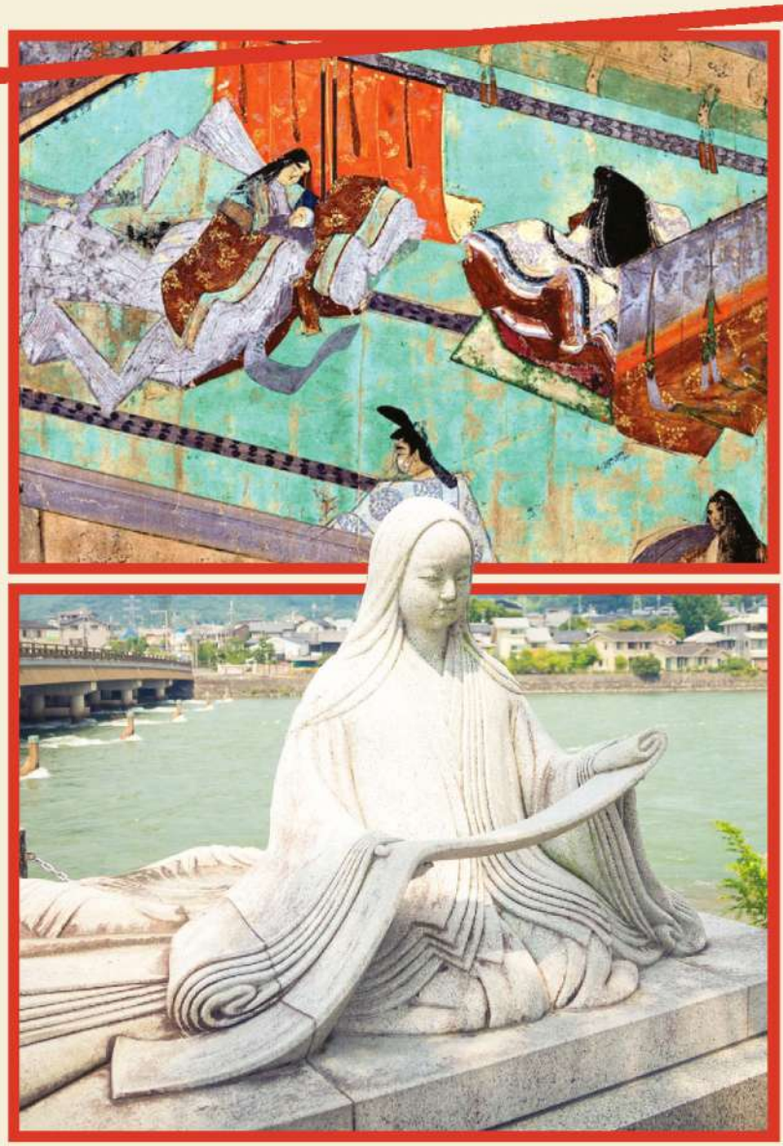
As well as telling a chronological tale of the events surrounding her fictional protagonist set in the culture of the aristocracy in Early Heian Japan, it also dives beneath

> "It was more than just a story: it was an exploration of what it means to be human"

the surface and offers deep psychological insight into the characters' lives, something that is believed to have never been done before. Today, most novels wouldn't be complete without a peek into the inner workings of the characters, but in the 11th century it was nothing short of genius. It is more than just a story: it is an exploration of what it means to be human.

Although Murasaki's romantic lead Genji, a handsome and sensitive courtier, is male, much of the story is told through the eyes of his female lovers. The women featured in the novel are fully multifaceted, and subvert the typical roles that men and women play in Heian court culture. It reflects how women were disadvantaged and disempowered by their environment, and explores the ways in which women could play the system to gain control. At the time it was written, aristocratic Japanese women were constantly shielded from public view by curtains or screens, hidden from men that weren't their fathers or husbands. The women in *The Tale of Genji* remove those screens, if only metaphorically, by communicating with men via written poetry passed along with the help of messengers. Curious, men begin to sneak glimpses behind the screens, and slowly but surely instigate sexual relationships with the mysterious women on the other side. From there, the novel explores how the women's relations with the right man alters the course of their lives. Through *The Tale of Genji*, Murasaki offered a new look into the lives of women of her standing in a way that was both unconventional and groundbreaking.

Alongside its examination of women, *The Tale of Genji* is also admired for its portrayal of historical Japanese culture,



TOP During the Early Heian Era, Japanese noblewomen were often shielded from male view by screens

ABOVE Murasaki grew lonely at the Imperial Court, and eventually retired to dedicate her life to literature and religion

ABOVE-RIGHT *The Tale of Genji* depicts the lives of Japanese aristocracy in the Early Heian Era

particularly the culture shared among the country's nobility. Murasaki detailed everything from the Early Heian Period's clothes, styles and entertainment to its moral code and beauties of nature. Although the tale follows intricate stories, characters and relationships from Murasaki's marvellous imagination, her picture of high society came straight from her experiences with nobility. In 1005, Murasaki was awarded an even closer look at the upper class when her pedigree as a writer led to her being invited to work at the Imperial Court itself. She served as a lady-in-waiting and occasional tutor to the teenage Empress Shōshi. It is unclear why exactly Murasaki was chosen for this particular role, but some believe that the young empress liked to surround herself with women of literary talent – her other two ladies-in-waiting were revered poets Akazome Emon and Izumi Shikibu. Always going against the grain, Murasaki took every opportunity she could to secretly teach Empress Shōshi Chinese.

Now living in the setting of her own novel, she continued to write during her service and would frequently add scenes from her court life into her other written works. But unlike the romantic, sweeping story of Genji, works like *The Diary of Lady Murasaki*, a collection of vignettes written by Murasaki around 1008 and 1010, are starkly realistic. She wrote about more mundane events and subjects, like sordid relationships, embarrassing court members and men that made her uncomfortable.

During her tenure at the Imperial Court, Murasaki was surprisingly quite unpopular, likely a result of her supposedly

"prickly" personality, and often found herself the subject of gossip and alienation. In *The Diary of Lady Murasaki*, she expresses her umbrage at her reputation: "'Well, we never expected this!' they all say. 'No one liked her. They all said she was so pretentious, awkward, difficult to approach, prickly, too fond of her tales, haughty, prone to versifying, disdainful, cantankerous, and scornful. But when you meet her, she is strangely meek, a completely different person altogether!' How embarrassing! Do they really look upon me as a dull thing, I wonder? I am what I am."

Both the death of her husband and her unfavourable reputation meant Murasaki was no stranger to loneliness. At the Imperial Court, she became withdrawn and eventually retired to dedicate the rest of her life to literature and Buddhism. Her year of death is unknown but some believe it to be 1014, making her just 41 years old when she died. Despite the scarcity of meaningful connections in her own life, her work served to connect readers of the era with a powerful, insightful look into the relationships that make us human. Her ingenious approach to storytelling undoubtedly opened up whole new worlds to the writers that came after her, making her perhaps one of the most influential contributors to literature that ever lived. And it's certainly astonishing that not only was the world's first novel a romance (and a literary masterpiece of a romance at that), it was written by a nameless woman with an extraordinary voice.

ABOVE A lacquer case built to hold the 54 volumes of the *Tale of Genji*

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HISTORY OF ZOOS

From the royal menageries of the past to the zoological gardens of today

Written by Emily Staniforth

The natural world has always been a subject of human fascination. The animal kingdom in particular has rarely been left alone by humans, with the capturing and keeping of animals a feature of many societies over the millennia. But where did the idea of seizing animals from the wild and putting them on display start? And how did this evolve into the zoos and wildlife parks that are a feature of the modern world?

Some of the earliest examples of animals being acquired for a menagerie can be traced back to Ancient Egypt. Evidence found at Thebes suggests that the female Pharaoh Hatshepsut kept animals such as elephants, leopards and baboons in her wildlife collection. Other exotic animal remains found in an ancient cemetery at Hierakonpolis show that although the Ancient Egyptians might have enjoyed ownership of foreign pets they did not necessarily know how to care for them properly.

EXPERT BIO

© Kilitos Andrea

HELEN COWIE

Helen Cowie is a professor of Early Modern History at the University of York. Her latest book is *Victims of Fashion: Animal Commodities in Victorian Britain* (Cambridge University Press, 2021).

The skeletons of baboons and a hippo with broken bones suggest that the animals were dangerously tied up and sustained injuries while trying to free or protect themselves. But despite the animals not being well cared for, their presence was important in that the menagerie was a source of pride for the collector. It is likely that for Hatshepsut, the existence of the menagerie and the displaying of these animals was a symbol of her wealth and status; having access to such creatures exemplified an ability to travel and trade with foreign lands.

EVIL ETHNOLOGY

The dark history of the human zoo

While zoos and menageries have long been a place where people have been able to view and study the animal kingdom, some European zoos in the 19th and 20th centuries took these ideas to an inhumane level. The 'human zoo' became a popular attraction for people to come and view individuals from elsewhere in the world, primarily Africa and Asia. These poor people were taken from their homes and transported across the globe to be placed in ethnological exhibitions where they were displayed to crowds and kept captive in manufactured surroundings that were said to mimic their authentic living situations. The narrative of these indigenous people as 'savages' was perpetuated in these settings, and they were seen as comparable to the animals kept in similar enclosures.

The exhibitions held at the zoos were often temporary and provided an extra attraction to draw in the crowds. World Fairs were also often home to these ethnological exhibitions, where indigenous people were made to put on displays to entertain the Western attendees. Sometimes, people were displayed in cages and it wasn't uncommon for them to die from disease or from cold. One of the most infamous examples of the displaying of humans in a zoo is from 1906 when Ota Benga, a Congolese man, was kept in a cage with chimpanzees and apes at the Bronx Zoo in New York. He was labelled as "The Missing Link", implying that he was closer to apes than people. The zoo faced some backlash at the time and the exhibition was quickly closed. Benga, however, remained at the zoo.

"Zoos need to be understood within their wider historical contexts," explains Helen Cowie, professor of history at the University of York. "Early menageries, for instance, should be viewed within the context of overseas exploration, elite entertainment and displays of princely power."

The ownership of wild and foreign animals can be seen in different examples from early history all over the world. "Collections of exotic animals were first established by monarchs, who exhibited them as symbols of their power over nature," says Cowie. "In the early modern period, kings sometimes organised fights between exotic animals for the entertainment of the court or paraded their animals through the streets in grandiose processions." Using animals in fights was not a new concept, with the Romans having pitted wild beasts such as lions, elephants, bears and alligators against each other (and sometimes people) in gladiatorial arenas. During the medieval and early modern periods, animal blood sports continued to be popular in Europe and were a common form of entertainment up until around the 18th century. In Elizabethan England in particular, attending bear-baiting displays, where bears were forced to fight each other to the death, was a popular pastime. Elsewhere in Europe, the owners of menageries also used their animals to satisfy their bloodthirsty curiosity. As Cowie explains: "The Portuguese king Manuel I staged a fight between a rhinoceros and an elephant in Lisbon's Terreiro do Paço in 1515 to test the longstanding belief that the animals were mortal enemies. (The rhinoceros was declared victor when the elephant ran away)."

Away from viewing animals as a source of violent entertainment and a way to assert dominance and control over the natural world, the displaying of animals as a visual representation of power was a key motivation for their procurement. As a status symbol, animals were often gifted and traded on occasions of political diplomacy and international relations. In 1487, such a gift was presented to Lorenzo de' Medici, the Italian statesman who presided over the cultural, political and economic affairs of the Republic of Florence. The Egyptian Sultan al-Ashraf Qaitbay arranged for a giraffe to be brought to Florence for Lorenzo as a gift to ensure the maintenance of the Egyptian relationship with the Florentines, who traded in Cairo.

"THE EXISTENCE OF THE MENAGERIE AND THE DISPLAYING OF THESE ANIMALS WAS A SYMBOL OF STATUS"

Although the Medici family were no strangers to the acquisition of wild animals (the noble family's menagerie included a lion house), the giraffe proved to be an impressive site for the people of Florence, particularly as the last giraffe in Italy had been during the reign of Julius Caesar. The Medici giraffe was not kept locked away but was available for all to see as a physical representation of Medici prestige; Cowie describes how it "wandered the streets of Florence, stealing apples from the local peasants". Proof of the giraffe's existence and the

Exotic animals were pitted against each other in the Roman gladiatorial arena

ABOVE-LEFT An engraving of wild animal traders in East Africa

ABOVE-RIGHT The Medici giraffe appears in this painting of Lorenzo meeting ambassadors

impact it had on the city-state is evident in its depiction throughout the art of Renaissance Florence, despite the animal only having lived for a couple of years.

One of the most impressive royal menageries of the medieval period was the one at Tower of London. Established in 1235 under the reign of King Henry III (1207-72), this menagerie was the first of its kind in England and began with a gift of three big cats given to the king by the Holy Roman Emperor Frederick III. There is some debate over whether these cats were lions or leopards, but nevertheless they were housed in the Tower, soon to be joined by an array of exotic animals that were received by the royal family over the years. An elephant joined the menagerie in 1255, a gift from the king of France, but sadly it only survived for a couple of years, possibly because its keepers fed it with wine. Although the animals were cared for to the best of the keepers' abilities, the cramped conditions and lack of knowledge about the animals meant many of the menagerie's beasts had limited life spans.

Alongside the lions, leopards, lynxes and baboons that made up the menagerie's collection, one of the most unusual occupants was a 'white' bear given to Henry III in 1252 by King Haakon of Norway. Most historians have come to the conclusion that this particular bear was in fact a polar bear, and it became a hit with the population of London who had gotten used to the sight of big cats at the Tower. The polar bear proved to be a challenge for the sheriffs employed as its keepers, particularly as King Henry decreed that the bear must be allowed to feed itself. A muzzle was made for the bear and a chain was provided so that the creature could be walked from the Tower down to the River Thames on a daily basis. There, it would be allowed to swim in the water and look for fish, all the time attached to a rope that was held by a presumably very brave and very nervous handler. The spectacle was hugely popular with the London crowds, who would never have seen anything of the kind before. Again, while these animals served to entertain the visitors who came to gawk at them, they were primarily to show the power of the Crown. As a result, the care of the animals was a secondary concern and there were occasions where not only the exotic creatures suffered but visitors and keepers were maimed or killed by the Tower's wild inhabitants.

These early royal menageries were not solely a European phenomenon. When the Spanish conquistador Hernán Cortés arrived in Tenochtitlan (now Mexico City) in 1519 he reported that the Aztec emperor ▶

BELOW Elephant rides on African bush elephant Jumbo at Regent's Park Zoo

All images: © Alamy, © Getty Images

Moctezuma II had a staff of around 300 people who cared for the animals in his menagerie, which included eagles, jaguars, pumas and wolves. Cowie also highlights that the "Ottomans kept large menageries in Istanbul, while many Indian princes kept exotic beasts for combat and display".

As the centuries passed, imperial expansion and advancements in transport meant that exotic animals became much more accessible. "Zoological gardens (later abbreviated to 'zoos') emerged at the turn of the 19th century and represented a shift from the private menageries of the early modern period to the public institutions we have today," explains Cowie. "This shift began in 1793, when French revolutionaries transferred the surviving animals from Louis XVI's menagerie at Versailles to a new national menagerie in the Parisian Jardin des Plantes. It was consolidated in 1828 with the establishment of the Gardens of the Zoological Society of London (the future London Zoo) and the emergence of zoological gardens in other European cities, including Dublin (1831), Bristol (1835), Antwerp (1843) and Berlin (1844)."

While the Jardin des Plantes was created out of the necessity to remove the animals once owned by the French king as a physical representation of the monarchy's loss of power, the zoological gardens in London are commonly cited as the first to be borne out of scientific intentions. Yet while the Zoological Society's establishment is more of a zoo as we understand them today, collecting animals for scientific purposes actually dates as far back as Ancient Greece.

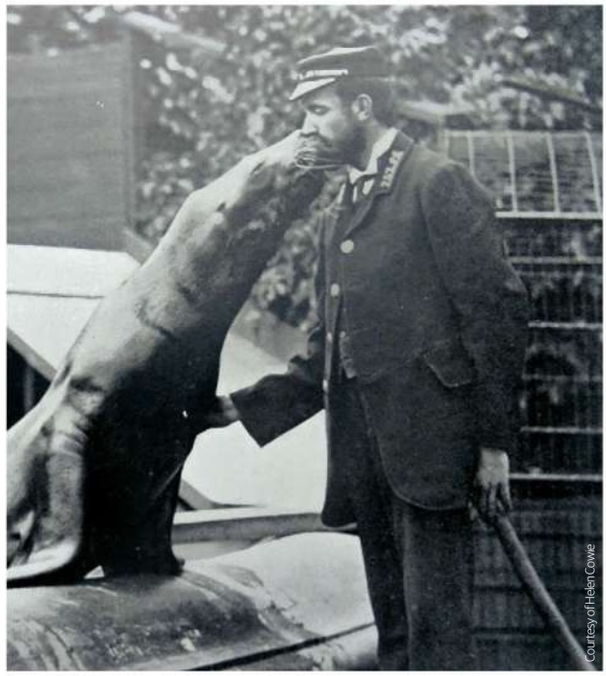
At the Lyceum in Athens, the Peripatetic School was established by the philosopher Aristotle in around 335 BCE. Here, as well as teaching, Aristotle would research and write on a number of subjects, including botany, biology, zoology and natural history. Alexander the Great, who ruled in Athens after it had been taken over by Macedonia, is said to have supplied Aristotle with a number of exotic animals, which were housed in the school's menagerie. Aristotle was able to study these creatures, their habitats, behaviours, territories, cycles and anatomy.

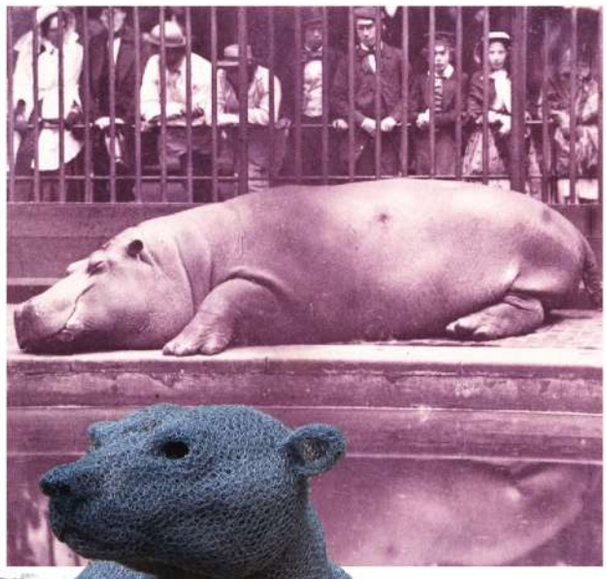
Though many of the animals in the Lyceum's menagerie probably did not survive long and were kept primarily for anatomical research purposes and observation rather than conservation, Aristotle's endeavours to understand the animals in his collection can be seen as one of the earliest examples of a zoo dedicated to the study of zoology.

If we look even further back in time to Ancient China, the Garden of Intelligence was created by Emperor Wen Wang in around 1060 BCE. Spread over 1,500 acres, it housed animals such as deer, fish and birds. Although there is not much known about the Garden, and while the creatures kept there appear to have been less exotic than in some of the other menageries from history, the name of the collection suggests that there was some element of study intended to be undertaken by the people who visited.

With the advent of the Age of Enlightenment, a period of time in the 17th and 18th centuries where scientific endeavour was prized in European society, people were motivated to understand more about the natural world around them and thus zoos became a centre of learning for naturalists and scientists. "Most 19th-century zoos embraced scientific goals in order to distinguish themselves from earlier menageries," explains Cowie. "In contrast to menageries, zoos stressed the educational value of their collections, the superior living conditions accorded to their animals and the scope they provided for scientific research. Mortality rates were very high, however, and many animals perished from disease, starvation or injuries sustained during capture. Writing in 1872, naturalist Frank Buckland estimated that out of every six or seven rhinoceroses caught in a pitfall in Malacca, only one was uninjured and in a condition to be sent to Europe."

However, as zoological study advanced, looking after the captured animals became more important as they began to be valued in their own right rather than as an extension of human power. "Survival rates increased gradually over the course of the 19th century as zoological knowledge and veterinary medicine improved, but


Courtesy of Helen Cowie



TOP A sea lion performing a trick with its keeper

ABOVE Obaysch the hippo in its enclosure at London Zoo in 1852

LEFT A wire sculpture commemorates the Tower of London menagerie's polar bear

All images © Alamy, © Getty Images

Ming the giant panda is petted by visitors at London Zoo

THE EVOLUTION OF THE ZOO

Helen Cowie questions whether the ethos of the modern zoo has improved since they first opened

ignorance of the habits and diets of some animals remained high," says Cowie. "In 1848, for instance, an orangutan exhibited at the Jardin des Plantes consumed 'chocolate, roast meat, wine and even liqueurs' and was 'put to bed between a large cat and a very shaggy dog' to keep him warm at night – treatment that resulted in an early death."

While naturalists were transforming zoological parks into places of scientific research and understanding, the zoo became a source of entertainment in an altogether different capacity than it had been in the age of private menageries. As zoological parks and gardens began to be opened to the general public, visitors had the opportunity to explore the world through the variety of exotic animals that were completely new to them. Alongside their scientific purpose, many zoos took advantage of their appeal to a wide audience and started to offer experiences and attractions. Some zoos offered elephant rides or taught the animals in their care to perform tricks for enraptured crowds.

"From the 1850s, zoos also started to promote individual animals as zoological 'stars', capitalising on their 'celebrity' status to increase profits," says Cowie. "In 1850, London Zoo's first ever hippopotamus, Obaysch, prompted a surge in visitor numbers and spawned a range of hippo-themed paraphernalia, including a small statuette crafted by the sculptor Joseph Gawen (supposedly from Nile mud), a Hippopotamus Polka composed by Louis Saint Mars, and a variety of hippopotamus-inspired trinkets from silver figurines to hippo-embossed breast pins. Nearly a century later, the arrival of the first panda, Ming, at the zoo in 1938 elicited a similar reaction, inspiring 'panda dolls... panda jokes... children's books, nursery wallpaper, charms, bangles, cigarette cases [and] brooches.'"

Nowadays, the zoo remains a popular tourist attraction for visitors who are excited to get a glimpse of animals they are unlikely to ever see in their natural habitat. As the climate crisis worsens and more animals are added to the endangered species list, the main purpose of the modern zoological park is now conservation. Breeding programmes attempt to ensure the survival of animals that may otherwise become extinct and zoos still regularly advertise their newest inhabitants, with the birth of certain creatures often making headlines around the world. Outside of the zoo, safari parks and experiences have also soared in popularity as people are able to travel to the natural habitats of wild creatures and observe them in their own surroundings.

Though the modern zoo seems like a far cry from the private royal menageries of the past, the zoo is still a representation of human power over nature as we try to correct some of the wrongs we have done to the natural world and influence how the animal kingdom lives, breeds and survives.

"MOST 19TH-CENTURY ZOOS EMBRACED SCIENTIFIC GOALS TO DISTINGUISH THEMSELVES FROM EARLIER MENAGERIES"

"On the face of it, modern zoos have evolved significantly from the first zoos that were open to the public. Zoos no longer take animals from the wild, but generally secure them through breeding or exchanges with other zoos, putting an end to the environmental destruction associated with the wild animal trade. Most have embraced the rhetoric of conservation, contributing to international breeding programmes and giving some of their profits to wildlife protection initiatives overseas. Animal husbandry has also improved considerably since the 19th century, with better nutrition, larger enclosures and better veterinary care resulting in a longer life expectancy for zoo animals.

"While there have certainly been significant changes in the exhibition of exotic animals, however, the continuities across time are perhaps equally striking and offer some important caveats to the 'improvement' narrative. First, despite a shift in emphasis, zoos continue to exert power over animals, and some species (especially pandas) still function as diplomatic gifts. Second, while the range of animals on display has increased over the centuries, audiences continue to gravitate towards a few 'charismatic' mammals, with the result that many modern zoos still stock them for entertainment purposes. Elephants, great apes and big cats have almost always been popular, while reptiles and birds have generally drawn fewer crowds. Third, though staged animal performances may have fallen out of fashion in the 20th century, the desire to see zoo animals being active, or to interact with them in some way, has not abated, as evidenced by the continued popularity of sea lion displays, feeding exhibitions and immersive enclosures where visitors can enter the habitats of selected non-aggressive animals. The chimpanzee's tea party of the early 20th century (which persisted in London Zoo until 1972) was in many ways a sanitised version of feeding time at the Tower Menagerie in the 17th century, when, according to the diarist Samuel Pepys, visitors could gain free entry if they brought along a live dog or cat to feed to the lions! Although the official ethos of the zoo has changed, some elements of animal display remain the same."

Courtesy of Helen Cowie

ANCIENT DEMONS

From the earliest times people have thought evil powers haunted the world and inflicted harm. Where did these beliefs come from?

Written by Ben Gazur

Demons are everywhere. That at least is the impression one gets from watching any of the many horror films that fill cinemas. Whether they're killing with a smile, dragging people to hell or challenging exorcists to get rid of them, they seem to be inescapable. Yet the idea that demons infest our world is not a new one. For millennia people have seen malevolent spirits as the cause of illness, bad luck and madness.

WHAT WERE THE FIRST DEMONS?

Before searching for the history of demons, we need to define them. Despite the best efforts of demonologists there have been few reliable sightings of demons and so no scientific study is possible. To study demons is to study people's belief in demons. Demons can be loosely categorised as supernatural beings with evil intentions towards humanity.

The first demons will never be known by name to us. Hints of belief in the spirits can be found in cave art dating to tens of thousands of years ago. Therianthrope images, ones which blend humans and animals, have been found in widely disparate locations. In the cave of Les Trois Frères in France there are paintings of humans with deer antlers and tails, or bull's horns ▶

© Getty Images

"An angry god is often indistinguishable from a demon"

LEFT The Furies were monstrous female spirits in Greek mythology who tormented humans who'd displeased the gods

ABOVE In the Egyptian afterlife the goddess Ammit devoured those souls who were judged unworthy

and faces. A painting in an Indonesian cave known as Leang Bulu' Sipong 4 shows humans hunting various animals but the humans have the features of dogs, pigs and birds. Analysis of uranium deposits on top of the painting has dated it to around 44,000 years old.

The most famous therianthrope figure from prehistory is the Lion-man statue from Germany. Carved from a piece of mammoth ivory with flint tools, it is the oldest known human statue in the world and has been dated to around 40,000 years old. Intriguingly, this human is shown with the head of a lion.

What these zoomorphic images meant to the people who created them is hotly debated and will perhaps never be settled. It does show, however, that our ancestors could imagine beings that were beyond what could be seen with their own eyes. Transgression between the realms of animal and human would often be seen in demons in later times and many were described as having bestial features.

Demons of Mesopotamia

The first written records that we possess that discuss religion come from the Mesopotamian societies. The Sumerians developed their system of cuneiform writing around 3,400 BCE. It persisted for thousands of years and was adopted by the later Babylonians and Assyrians. The texts that have come down to us record the rich mythology of their cultures – and the supernatural boogeymen who inhabited their world.

The vast Mesopotamian pantheon featured many deities as well as lesser supernatural beings. Because their gods were anthropomorphic they could act in petty and violent ways just like humans. An angry god is often indistinguishable from a demon. In the *Epic of Gilgamesh* the goddess Ishtar visits terrible punishments on her lovers who disappoint her. When Gilgamesh refuses her advances she sends the demonic Bull of Heaven to ravage the land.

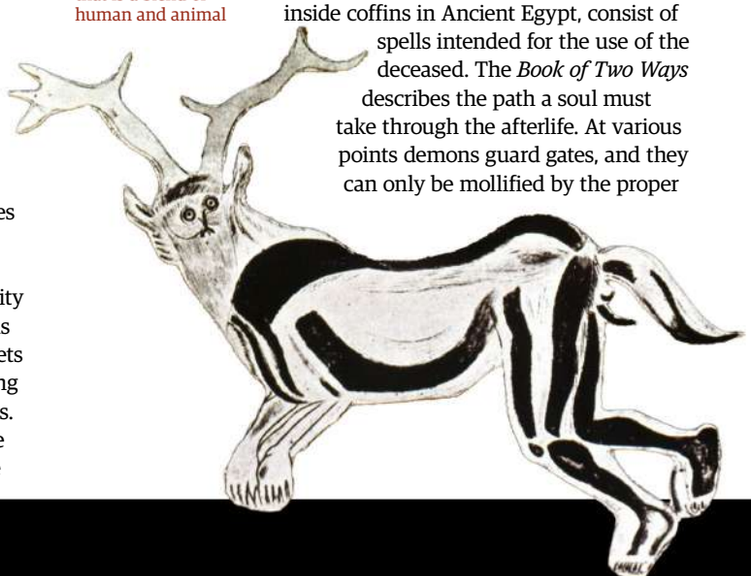
There were truly malevolent beings in the Mesopotamian conception of the world. Amulets show the female demon Lamashtu with a lion's head, clutching snakes, and suckling a wolf and a dog. Lamashtu was particularly feared by women in childbirth as she had a fondness for eating babies. Texts describe her sniffing out the homes that held children inside. Prayers and incantations that were used to ward off this personification of childhood mortality have been found that invoke the hideous god Pazuzu to drive her off. Many amulets with his face have been found, suggesting he was a major protector against demons.

Other Mesopotamian demons include the children of the goddess Tiamat. She birthed scorpion men, dragons, monstrous snakes – and a hybrid of a snake, lion and bird. We are told that instead of blood these monsters were filled with venom. The demon Asag was apparently so ugly that his presence caused rivers to boil, and from his union with the mountains he produced a race of rock demons.

A large number of works survive that give instructions to priests and exorcists on how to drive out demons and evil spirits from a person. One method was to take a model of the demon that was attacking you and place it in a toy boat with items that might tempt the demon. This boat was then set afloat on a river and as the figure was whisked away on the current so the demon would be carried off. Much of later thinking about demons would be dominated by developing methods to free mortals from their grasp.

Demons in the religion of the Ancient Egyptians were most often found in the afterlife. While demons could cause harm to the living it was the threat they posed to the dead that concerned most Egyptians. The *Coffin Texts*, found written inside coffins in Ancient Egypt, consist of spells intended for the use of the deceased. The *Book of Two Ways* describes the path a soul must take through the afterlife. At various points demons guard gates, and they can only be mollified by the proper

BELOW The *Sorcerer* is a cave painting dating from 13,000 years ago depicting a creature that is a blend of human and animal



THE DEMONS OF HELL

Some of the earliest myths of the afterlife give demons a role in punishing the souls of the damned

Tales of the Babylonian goddess Ishtar, known as Inanna to the Sumerians, give a direct view of the afterlife and the demons who dwell there. The *Descent of Inanna* sees the goddess go down into the underworld known as Kur. This is a gloomy place where the spirits of the dead eat only dust. When Inanna attempts to leave she is pursued by galla demons...

"The galla, the demons of the underworld,
clung to her side.
The galla were demons who know no food,
who know no drink,
Who eat no offerings, who drink no libations,
Who accept no gifts.
They enjoy no lovemaking.
They have no sweet children to kiss.
They tear the wife from the husband's arms,
They tear the child from the father's knees,
They steal the bride from her marriage home."
(English translation by Samuel N Kramer)

These demons were clearly capable of dragging unfortunate people out of life and into the underworld. Inanna is not allowed to leave the underworld unless she offers someone to die in her place. When she realises the god Dumuzid had not properly mourned her apparent death she offers him up in her stead. Images found on many contemporary cylinder seals show Dumuzid surrounded by the galla demons and being tortured. The role of demons as agents of punishment in hell would continue for centuries to come.

It is likely that the Abrahamic religions evolved their conception of hell and demons from the legends that had developed in Mesopotamia.

recitation of spells. Should the soul fail to give the proper incantation they will be blocked from moving on. These demons have names like Dogface, She of the Knife, and He Whose Face is Dreadful.

Many of the depictions of Egyptian demons show them as anthropomorphic but with the heads of animals, which is similar to the way major gods were shown. The form of the demons was sometimes key to their role. Those with snake heads were sneaky as they tried to tempt souls, those with baboon aspects were cleverer and sat in judgment of the dead.

THE CLASSICAL DAIMONS

The English word 'demon' is derived from the Greek word 'daimon'. While demon has only negative connotations in English the original Greek word represented a potentially more positive spirit. Socrates believed he had a daimonion (divine spirit) that gave him warnings if he was about to do something wrong. Homer separates the major deities (theoi) from the lesser divine beings (daimons).

The Greeks did have an idea of demons that is more similar to modern definitions, though they were more impersonal. The poet Hesiod's *Theogony,* which describes how the gods came into being, tells of how the goddess Nyx, or Night, gave birth to various evil spirits. She brings forth Doom, Fate, Blame, Old Age and Strife. Strife then gave birth to Toil, Murder, Famine and other terrible things that afflict humanity.

The Keres were another of the offspring of Nyx, and represented violent deaths. Although they could not bring about death themselves they waited for a person to die before diving down on them and using their sharp claws to tear the soul from the body and feast on the blood. The souls were carried into the underworld by the Keres before they rushed back to Earth to eat again.

If in our definition of demons we do not include the various monsters of Greek and Roman myth that could be slain, such as the many beasts faced by Herakles, there are still plenty of demonic characters left. For example the Furies, or Erinyes, were ancient divinities born from the blood dropped from the castrated genitalia of Uranus. They are described in different ways, but all of them horrible. They were variously said to have the wings of a bat, snakes for hair, or the heads of dogs. Yet even here their role was ambiguous. They tormented humans - but not any and all humans. The Furies relentlessly pursed people who had broken an oath or killed a parent - in other words people who had broken the laws of the gods.

DEMONOLOGY

If the Classical world was ambivalent about demons the Abrahamic faiths of Judaism, Christianity and Islam had and still have a more certain role for them. Where pantheistic faiths have many gods it is easy to fit demons into a scheme of the universe, but those who follow a monotheistic religion with one all-good God find it harder to explain why there is evil at all, let alone beings of evil.

All images: © Alamy

The Jewish Bible, which forms the Christian *Old Testament*, has few mentions of demons. In the Hebrew there are beings called shedim and se'irim. When the Bible was translated into Greek shedim was translated as daimon, giving us our modern term for demons. These terms were often used for foreign gods to which foolish people were said to sacrifice their children. The *Book of Leviticus* states that offering a child to Moloch, a god or demon depending on your faith, is an abomination. The idea that gods other than one's own were demons would have a long history.

In the rich collections of Jewish wisdom and folklore demons play a much stronger role. Lilith, who is mentioned only once in the Bible, evolved into a powerful female demon. Bowls with incantations against Lilith have been found in Mesopotamia and it seems that Lilith developed out of figures common in Mesopotamian belief. In later tradition Lilith was the first wife of Adam, but quarrelled with the first man over who would be on top during sexual intercourse. Lilith abandoned Adam and now roams the world seducing men to steal their seed to give birth to more demons.

Other demons can be found in Jewish texts. Asmodeus features in the *Book of Tobit,* where he is described as "the worst of demons". In other texts he struggles with King David and would later be brought into Christian belief.

Just as several aspects of Judaism had been influenced by Babylonian religion, so many ideas about demons were imported to Christianity. Many of the healing miracles of Jesus involve the casting out of demons. When a mute man is healed in *Luke 11:14* it is after a voiceless demon is driven away. In the *Synoptic Gospels* a demon, or demons, are driven out of a man and into a herd of swine, who then rush into the sea and drown.

In the centuries after Jesus demons were still considered to be real. St Paul in *1 Corinthians* says pagans who offer sacrifices to their gods are not offering to deities but to demons. Other church fathers like Justin Martyr and Tertullian made similar claims. The author Catherine Nixey describes in *The Darkening Age* how Theophilus, bishop of Alexandria, drove a mob to destroy the statue of the demon Serapis, worshipped as a god by the pagans of Alexandria.

While the Devil may be the best-known demon today it was only in the 2nd century CE that he and his minions were first associated with demons. It was the theologian Tatian who first considered demons to be the same as the angels who fell from Heaven after Satan's rebellion against God. For Christians, demons became servants of 'the adversary'. Images of the early saint Anthony the Great often show his attempts at quiet contemplation of God being disturbed by grotesque demons who pull his flesh and beat him.

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Demonology developed into a realm of scholarship in the medieval and Early Modern periods. In the 11th century Michael Psellos wrote a treatise on the taxonomy of demons in which he separated them into six different types. Later demonologists would multiply the orders of demons and even name individual demons. Some were given precise roles: Titivillus was a demon responsible for mistakes made by scribes copying texts in monasteries. He was also said to collect the slips-of-tongues priests made in reciting prayers to use against them on Judgment Day. Alphonso de Spina, writing in the 15th century, used complex biblical mathematics in an attempt to pin down the exact number of demons. As the Bible says when Satan fell he took one-third of the stars of Heaven, presumably angels, then it stood to reason there were hundreds of thousands of demons.

> "Many of the healing miracles of Jesus involve the casting out of demons"

While it may seem strange to us to dedicate so much time to studying invisible forces, to the people of the time demons were a real and present threat and a risk to eternal salvation. This was intensified by works such as the 16th century *Malleus Maleficarum* (*The Hammer of the Witches*). In this text the roles of demons were defined and it acted as a manual on catching witches who made deals with them. This manual for witch-hunters says that "women are naturally more impressionable, and more ready to receive the influence of a disembodied spirit." This reasoning explains why more women then men were put through judicial torture, interrogation and execution. Demons could have very real negative effects on the lives of people, even if not in quite the way theologians had thought.

ABOVE Saint Anthony is shown being tormented by demons as he tries to contemplate spiritual matters

CONFESS YOUR SINS OR FACE THE WRATH OF THE INQUISITION!

There is no use in trying to hide, heathen! We have eyes everywhere! Prepare to be taught the harsh truth behind the Catholic Church's campaign to stamp out heresy, from its origins to the torturous methods employed in Spain and beyond

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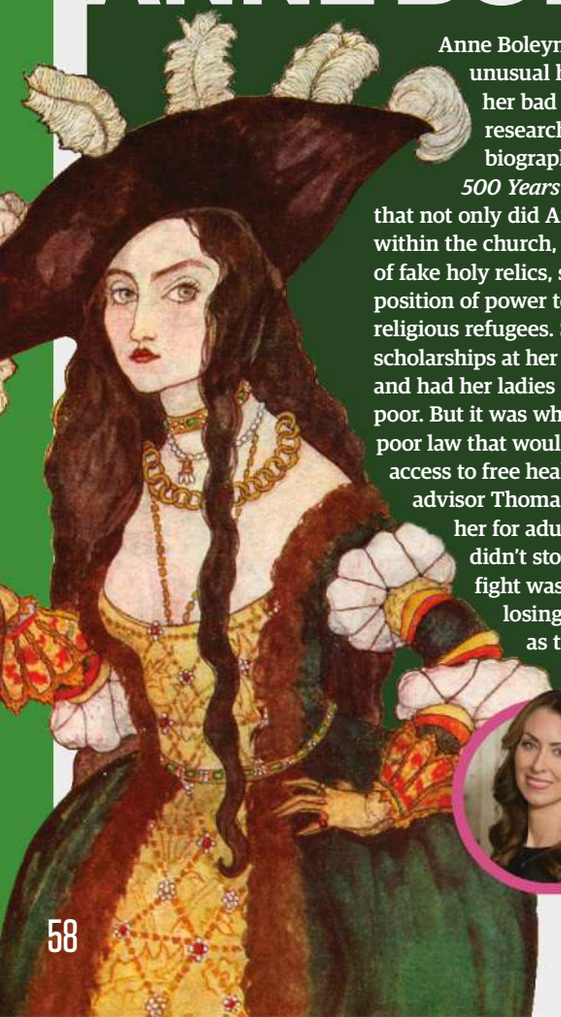
Leading historians champion women from the past who continue to inspire them

HEROINES OF HISTORY

To mark this year's Women's History Month, we gathered a panel of incredible historians to tell us about the women from the past they admire the most, and why. From famous monarchs to nearly anonymous pioneers, we received some fantastic responses, which we're delighted to share with you here.

ANNE BOLEYN



Anne Boleyn may seem an unusual history hero given her bad press. But in researching my corrective biography, *Anne Boleyn: 500 Years of Lies*, I discovered that not only did Anne fight corruption within the church, opposing the sale of fake holy relics, she also used her position of power to offer amnesty to religious refugees. She funded student scholarships at her own grammar school and had her ladies make smocks for the poor. But it was when Anne lobbied for a poor law that would see the people have access to free healthcare that the king's advisor Thomas Cromwell framed her for adultery. Still, Anne didn't stop there, and her final fight was against the homeless losing their place of refuge as the monasteries were dissolved.

HAYLEY NOLAN is a Tudor historian, Anne Boleyn expert and author of *Anne Boleyn: 500 Years of Lies* (2019).

DR ESTELLE PARANQUE is an academic in royal, diplomatic and Elizabethan studies and author of *Blood, Fire & Gold: The Story of Elizabeth I and Catherine de Medici* (2022).

NJINGA OF ANGOLA

During the early modern period, a queen defied all major European powers and stood her ground, for her country, for her people and for herself. Her name is not Elizabeth I nor Catherine the Great: she was Njinga of Angola. Through hardships, struggles and warfare, Njinga showed the world what a true warrior queen she was. She fought the Portuguese and the Dutch. She dressed as a man and forced her husband to dress as a woman. She reinvented and shaped her rulership through strong ideals: bravery, resilience and determination. She was a force to be reckoned with.

© Lady Martha Bruce

LT-COL THE LADY MARTHA BRUCE

Lady Martha Bruce was the pioneering governor of [women's prison] Cornton Vale from 1975 and instrumental in its establishment. Central to her thinking was the treatment of prisoners with dignity and respect. She understood about empowering women with skills – she'd honed her own in World War II. Resisting an instant officer promotion courtesy of her title (her father was the 10th earl of Elgin) Martha worked her way up through the ranks of the Auxiliary Territorial Service on mixed heavy anti-aircraft gun-sites. Letters home reveal a competitive girl keen to outperform the men – that she frequently did so was in no doubt. A radar operator sent overseas in 1945, Martha rose to lieutenant colonel in the Women's Royal Army Corps before she joined the Scottish Prison Service. With her aristocratic brusque and common sense approach, she was a force to be reckoned with who changed women's lives for the better.

DR TESSA DUNLOP
is an historian, writer and broadcaster whose books include *The Bletchley Girls* (2015), *The Century Girls* (2018) and *Elizabeth & Philip* (2022).

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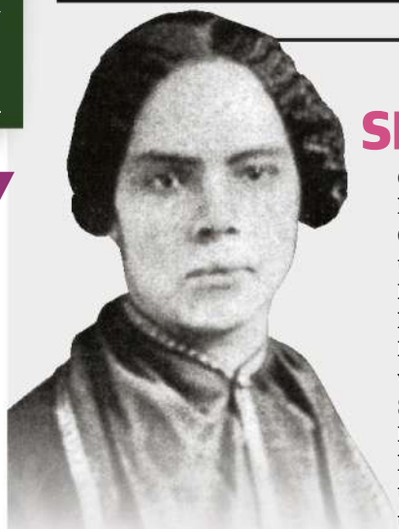
ARMY GIRLS
BY TESSA DUNLOP (FEATURING LT-COL THE LADY MARTHA BRUCE) IS OUT NOW IN PAPERBACK (HEADLINE, £10.99)

HILDEGARD OF BINGEN

Hildegard of Bingen (1098 – 1179) lived a long and brilliant life. She was Leonardo da Vinci centuries before him and better than him, because she finished her projects! Her work *Scivias* became an international best-seller, endorsed by the pope and emperor. But Hildegard was not just a visionary writer of theology – she was also an artist, scientist, linguist, political adviser and more. Her music is the most unique to survive from the medieval period, and she wrote the first morality play, which was performed in her all-female creative hub at Eibingen. She is the first person to describe a female orgasm, which might strike us as odd today given that she was a nun. Her collected works were copied down over the centuries and in them we can still witness her remarkable intellect and marvel at this medieval polymath.

© Getty Images

DR JANINA RAMIREZ
is a cultural historian working out of the University of Oxford and author of *Femina: A New History of the Middle Ages, Through the Women Written Out of It* (2022).



MARY ANN SHADD CARY

One of my favourite history heroes is Mary Ann Shadd Cary. She was born free in the slave-holding state of Delaware in 1823. As a child, her parents moved her to Pennsylvania where she was able to be educated. She thrived, but in 1850 the Fugitive Slave Act compelled her and her family to move to Canada to avoid being taken into slavery. There, Shadd Cary used her words as a weapon for the abolitionist movement. She founded and edited the first newspaper in North America run by a woman, *The Provincial Freeman*. When the Civil War broke out, she returned and helped to recruit Black soldiers to fight. In her late 50s she entered the first class of the Howard University Law school and graduated at age 60. Shadd Cary is a pioneer and a leader in the abolitionist and women's rights movement. We should all know her name.

© Mavin Geman

KELLIE CARTER JACKSON
is the Michael and Denise Kellen '68' associate professor in the Department of Africana Studies at Wellesley College and author of *Force And Freedom* (2019).

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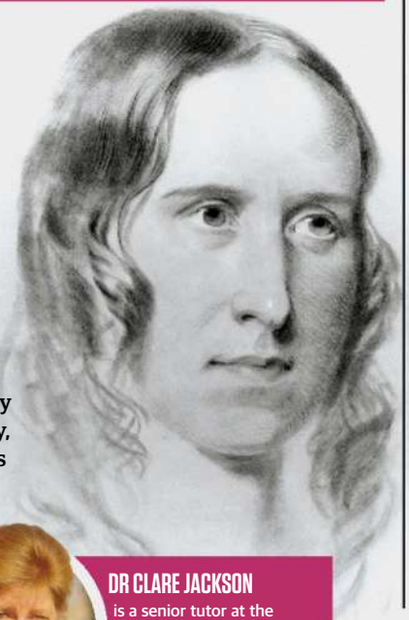
EMPRESS MATILDA

Who else but Empress Matilda? She was the ideal heir to the throne when she was so designated by her father, Henry I: mature, intelligent and with a great deal of international political and governmental experience. But all that counted for nothing, simply because she was female. As soon as Henry died Matilda was usurped by her cousin Stephen, a markedly less able but male rival, who was crowned king. Refusing to take this lying down, Matilda started a war that went on for the best part of two decades. She was never officially the queen of England herself, but her tenacious campaign meant that after Stephen's death the crown passed back to the rightful line and onto the head of her son, Henry II. Matilda might have lost her battle, but she won the war.

DR CATHERINE HANLEY is a medieval historian and author of *Two Houses, Two Kingdoms* (2022) and *Matilda: Empress, Queen, Warrior* (2019).

MARY ANNE EVERETT GREEN

After receiving an excellent education from her Wesleyan Methodist minister father, Mary Anne Everett Green capitalised on popular interest in female royalty prompted by Queen Victoria's accession to produce *Letters of Royal and Illustrious Ladies* (2 vols., 1846) and a six-volume *Lives of the Princesses* (1849-55) before being appointed as the first external editor at the Public Record Office. Combining forensically archival analysis with phenomenal productivity, Everett Green calendared 41, 800-page volumes of State Papers Domestic between 1855 and her death in 1895, while also raising four children. Many political historians working on the reigns of Edward VI, Mary I, Elizabeth I, James VI & I and Charles II, as well as the Interregnum, may well owe Everett Green an unconscious, but enormous, scholarly debt.



DR CLARE JACKSON is a senior tutor at the University of Cambridge and the author of *Devil-Land: England Under Siege 1588-1688* (2021).

SAINT KASSIANA

My nomination must be the trailblazing Saint Kassiana. Born c.805, this well-educated aristocratic maiden from Constantinople was so attractive that she caught the eye of Emperor Theophilos (829-842) and was invited to participate in his 'bride-show'. However, when overhearing him suggest that women have been the occasion for much evil, she retorted by claiming they have likewise been the occasion of much good. Her opinions being far from well-received, she shunned Byzantine public life in favour of asceticism. She founded her own monastery and became its first abbess, though was best-known as a hymnographer. As a defender of the Orthodox Church during the iconoclast period, she persisted in her faith, and is recorded as asserting; "I hate silence when it is time to speak."

DR EMMA J WELLS is an ecclesiastical and architectural historian, author and broadcaster. Her books include *Heaven On Earth* (2022).

OBORA SEX WORKERS

My female history hero is a group of nameless women. They were the workers in a brothel called Obora in 14th century Prague. During this time, sex work was a perfectly legal enterprise, but there were always detractors - especially within the Church. One day a priest called Master Ulrich barged into the building and chased them all out violently. It was his intention to close the brothel down, leaving the women with nowhere to go and no employment. Instead, the women marched to the city council and demanded that the priest be turned out and their rightful property be returned to them. They were successful, leaving Master Ulrich to complain bitterly to the Prague archdeacon about his failure. I love this story of resistance and knowledge that shows how ordinary women could band together to advocate for themselves against powerful men.

DR ELEANOR JANEGA is a medieval historian and the author of *The Once And Future Sex* (2023) and *The Middle Ages: A Graphic History* (2021).

KAMALADEVI CHATTOPADHYAY

In researching my new book, *East of Empire*, I developed a deep admiration for the Indian social activist Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay. She convinced Gandhi to allow women to participate in direct action; she also led the women's section of the Seva Dal (which trained volunteers and organised the nonviolent resistance to British Rule). However, in 1947 she broke with Congress and left politics rather than accept India's partition. Following independence and Gandhi's assassination, Chattopadhyay followed through on a project they had discussed to resettle partition refugees on a collective farm, Faridabad, which ultimately rehabilitated over 50,000 displaced people. In later years, Chattopadhyay devoted herself to the preservation of indigenous arts and handicrafts, for which she received international recognition and multiple honours.

DR ERIN O'HALLORAN
is an historian of empire and transnational connectivity in the Department of Archaeology at the University of Cambridge.

CONSTANCE MARKIEVICZ

Constance Markievicz arrived at her first ever organising meeting wearing a diamond tiara. A member of the English aristocracy in Ireland, she attended the Inghinidhe na hÉireann meeting in Dublin to join the Irish resistance to English occupation having been radicalised by the Sinn Féin journal. Markievizc had no incentive to join the Irish nationalist movement other than a sense of justice. She was imprisoned several times for her activities and sentenced to death for her role in the 1916 Easter Rising. Following Irish Independence she became the first woman to be elected as a British MP and the first woman in the world to take a cabinet position as Sinn Féin's minister for labour in the Dail. She acted against her own interests to fight against colonialism and empire. For all that, she is my hero.

DR EMMA SOUTHON
is an historian and author of *Agrippina: Empress, Exile, Hustler, Whore* (2018) and *A Fatal Thing Happened On The Way To The Forum* (2020).

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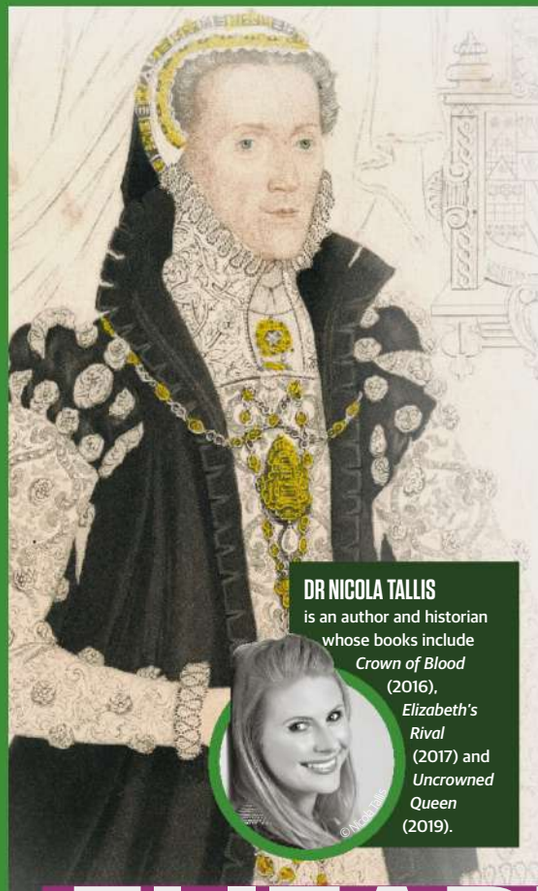

MILDRED COOKE, BARONESS BURGHLEY

The second wife of William Cecil, the man who would become one of the most important of Elizabeth I's reign, Mildred deserves praise and recognition in her own right. She was one of the most highly educated and intelligent women of her day, earning the admiration of her male contemporaries. A dedicatee of several books and a skilled translator, Mildred owned a vast library of books in multiple languages, many of which still survive. A remarkable woman with a passion for scholarship, Mildred stands out as being one of the most extraordinary female minds of her day.

DR NICOLA TALLIS
is an author and historian whose books include *Crown of Blood* (2016), *Elizabeth's Rival* (2017) and *Uncrowned Queen* (2019).

ELIZABETH I

Elizabeth I is my all-time heroine and where my love of history began. In an age when female rulers were seen as 'monstrous' and unnatural, she confounded all expectations. She won over her misogynistic male courtiers by pretending to share their regret that she was "but a weak and feeble woman" and proceeded to reign for longer and more successfully than any of her Tudor predecessors. Not bad for a woman who should never have come to the throne at all. Elizabeth's dazzling achievements are too numerous to list here. Suffice to say, by the time of her death, she had made England fall in love with queens.

TRACY BORMAN
is joint chief curator at Historic Royal Palaces and the author of *The Private Lives of the Tudors* (2016) and *Crown & Sceptre* (2021).

JUDY BATALION
is a writer, academic and the author of *New York Times* bestseller *The Light Of Days* (2021).

FRUMKA PLOTNICKA

Frumka Plotnicka led one of Poland's Jewish socialist youth movements. When World War II broke out, she fled the country but, feeling responsible for her community, smuggled herself back into Nazi-occupied Warsaw. In the ghetto, she ran soup kitchens, taught classes and extracted Jews from forced labour. Aged 25, she was known as 'Die Mameh' (mum). Covering her Jewish features with a kerchief, she risked her life and escaped the ghetto, travelling across Poland, keeping Jewish communities connected. She was killed during a ghetto 'liquidation' while firing at Nazis from a bunker. Frumka received a posthumous military medal for defending Poland from Nazism.

THE LIGHT OF DAYS: WOMEN FIGHTERS OF THE JEWISH RESISTANCE
BY JUDY BATALION IS OUT NOW IN PAPERBACK (VIRAGO, £10.99)

SAPPHO

Sappho's descriptions of falling in love should be taught in all schools. Her redolent words conjure up the fire that creeps under your skin; the silvery light of the Moon and the fact that love is bitter sweet - only Sappho is a little more realistic and suggests love is typically sweet and then bitter. As an inspiration to young girls - her love of women generated the terms Sapphic and lesbian - she is a rare exemplar of the female experience in antiquity. One of my favourite poems, *Fragment 16*, describes how Helen of Troy was "led away by desire" to pursue her empty dreams with Paris the Prince of Troy. It is a reminder that desire is a ferocious force. Hailed as the Tenth Muse, adored through history and beyond, Sappho is a vital role model.

BETTANY HUGHES OBE is an historian, author and broadcaster. Her audiobook *Helen Of Troy* is out now, and her new TV series *Treasures of the World* is on Channel 4 in the UK.

THE TIMES OR DAILY UNIVERSAL REGISTER PRINTED GEOGRAPHICALLY

ELEONORA, AGED 25

I admire Eleonora, aged 25, about whom almost all we know apart from her name and age is that she was the first woman in this country to be bold enough to place a Lonely Hearts ad. On 2 January 1788, she advertised on the front page of *The Times* newspaper for a "young gentleman of birth, education, and personal consequence... who will stand forth as her protector, to save her from the tyranny of her family on the one hand, and the impositions of lawyers on the other..." It was a radical and brave move for the period, but many more women were soon to emulate her. It was a societal shift that was to have long-term consequences for the way love and marriage evolved over time, introducing a newly democratic and egalitarian aspect to the ongoing conundrum of human mate choice.

FRANCESCA BEAUMAN is a writer, historian and television presenter, and author of *Shapely Ankle Preferr'd: A History of the Lonely Hearts Ad* (2012).

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MASSIVE BOOK BUNDLE TO WIN!

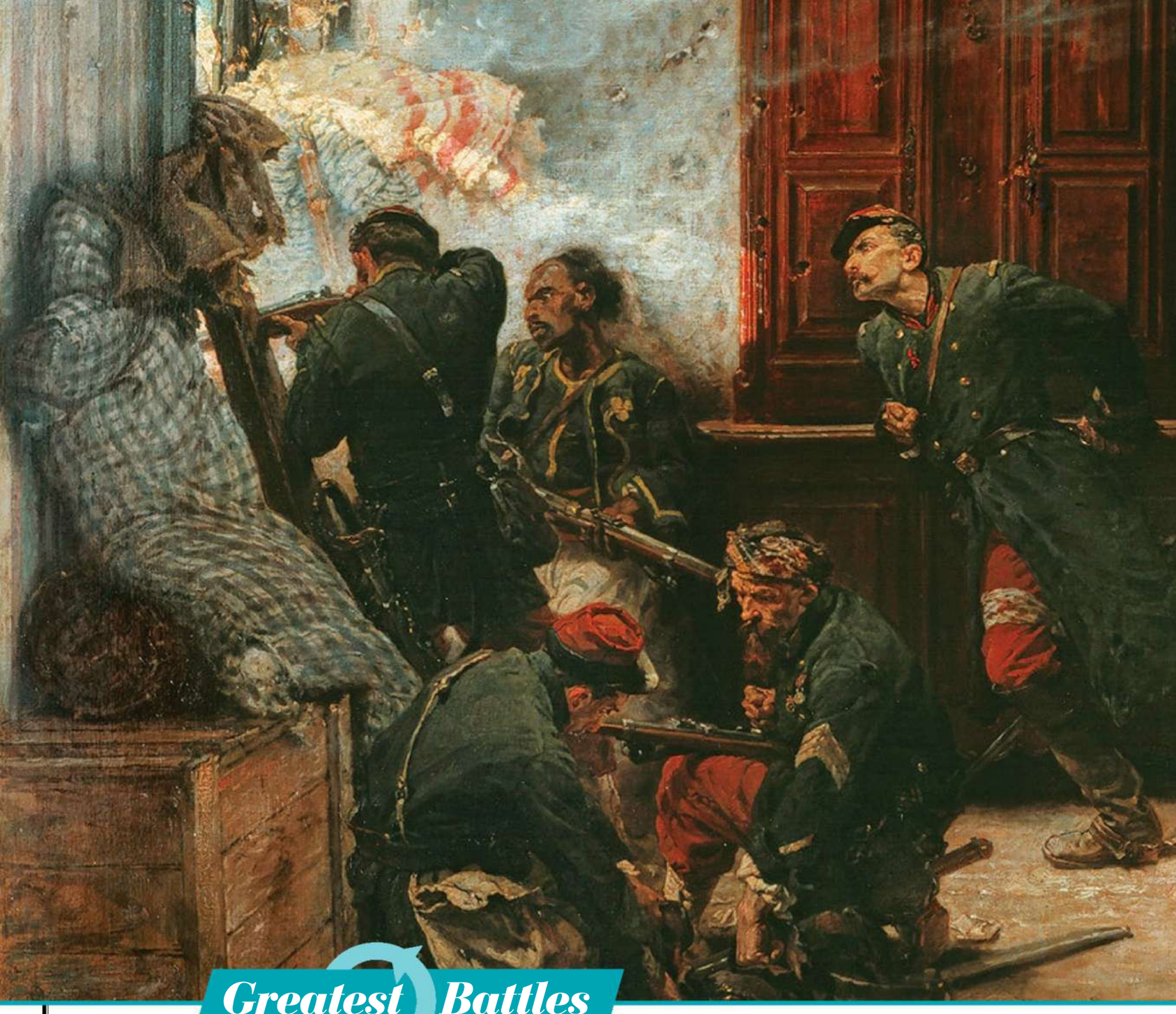
We're delighted to be giving away over £900-worth of history books to mark Women's History Month this issue. From ancient queens to modern artists, there's a wide range of topics covered and some historical fiction to enjoy too. We're only sorry we can't offer you a bookshelf to go with them all!

The list of over 50 books is too numerous to include, but we thank Thames & Hudson, Penguin Books, Verso Books, Osprey Publishing, Hodder & Stoughton, Head Of Zeus, The History Press, Unicorn Publishing, Orion Books, NYU Press, British Library Publishing and Yale University Press for their generous contributions. The full list of titles is available on the competition entry site.

Head to **bit.ly/WHMcomp** to enter and answer the following question:

Who wrote *Jane Eyre?*
A. Mary Shelley
B. Elizabeth Gaskell
C. Charlotte Brontë

Competition closes 22 March 2023



Greatest Battles

BATTLE OF SEDAN

NORTHEASTERN FRANCE, 1 SEPTEMBER 1870

Written by William E Welsh

During the 18th century, King Frederick I of Prussia set about melding a powerful professional army that his successor, Frederick 'the Great' II, would utilise during a series of wars. His aim was to expand the kingdom through conquest, such as in Silesia, and buoy its economy to raise the aspirations of its people. The growing power of Prussia threatened rival Austria, sparking repeated wars between the two central European powers. During the Napoleonic Wars, the Prussians had become acutely aware of the need for a general staff capable of developing military plans to achieve the kingdom's war aims – this was duly established in 1809.

In the wake of Napoleon's defeat, the rivalry between Austria and Prussia heated up again. When King William I took the crown in 1861, he appointed

French snipers hold out against Bavarian troops in Alphonse de Neuville's *The Last Cartridges*

Image source: wiki/Musee d'Orsay

ministers who were just as determined as he was to replace Austria as the champion of the German states. Since its foundation in the early 19th century, Austria had dominated the German Confederation, which consisted of nearly three dozen lesser German states.

Through the machinations of German Chancellor Otto von Bismarck, Germany deliberately provoked Austria. By employing Prussian Chief of General Staff Helmuth von Moltke's strategy of surrounding the enemy and defeating him in a kesselschlacht, literally translated as cauldron battle, the Prussians vanquished the Austrians on 3 July 1866.

The Congress of Vienna reset the expanded French borders to the 1792 level, reverting to the pre-war consensus. However, during the first half of the 19th century, the French gradually slid back toward an autocratic government. As a result, Louis-Napoleon Bonaparte, a nephew of Napoleon I, proclaimed himself Emperor Napoleon III in 1852. The new emperor invested in new technologies in the following decade. However, he did not institute changes in leadership or tactics.

THE SLIP INTO WAR

Bismarck saw the wars with Prussia's European rivals as a way to unify Germany under the Hohenzollern dynasty. Although the defeat of Austria had furthered this aim, it did not complete it. So Bismarck set about antagonising France so that the German states would find it advantageous to support Prussia in a war.

The political impetus for the Franco-Prussian War was Bismarck's attempt in spring 1870 to put a cousin of King William's on the throne in Spain – this was something wholly unpalatable to Napoleon III. When he objected, Bismarck made it seem as if the French government had insulted the Prussians. The French were outraged, and they declared war on 19 July 1870. The Prussians, with military assistance from the North German Confederation, rapidly deployed 380,000 men in three armies on the border regions. The French fielded 224,000 men in eight corps under Napoleon III to oppose them.

After a series of costly frontier battles in early August, the French fell back towards the fortified town of Metz. Having failed to successfully direct the frontier campaign, the French emperor removed himself from direct command. He subsequently divided his eight corps into two

armies, one of which was led by Marshal François Bazaine's Army of the Rhine and the other by Marshal Patrice MacMahon's Army of Châlons.

On 18 August, the Prussians launched chaotic frontal attacks against the French at Gravelotte on the outskirts of the city. Although Bazaine's army repulsed them, it withdrew inside the fortifications of Metz. General Karl von Steinmetz's Prussian First Army and Prince Frederick Charles Prussian Second Army promptly encircled Bazaine's army at Metz, trapping 180,000 men.

The day before the pitched battle at Gravelotte, Napoleon III left the Army of the Rhine and travelled under escort to Châlons where MacMahon was reinforcing his army with raw recruits from Paris. MacMahon marched his army northeast on 21 August with the Prussian Third Army under Crown Prince Frederick William in hot pursuit. MacMahon hoped to get around the Prussian right flank near the Belgian border and march southwest to Metz.

Moltke carved a new army out of the oversized Prussian Second Army at Metz, handing command of the newly established Army of the Meuse, the core of which was three infantry corps, to Crown Prince Albert of Saxony. Moltke then ordered the Army of the Meuse and the Third Army to march east in pursuit of MacMahon's army. On 30 August, French and Prussians clashed briefly at Beaumont-en-Argonne, and MacMahon retreated northeast to Sedan to consolidate his forces.

Moltke was delighted when informed of the French army's location. Moltke ordered Crown Prince Albert to march to Sedan on the right bank, and for Prince Frederick William's Third Army to advance on Metz via the left bank. The wily chief of staff planned to surround MacMahon's army and force them to fight a signature kesselschlacht. Once the enemy was surrounded, the Prussians would launch converging infantry attacks supported by massed artillery.

Sedan may have been a good place to regroup before resuming the march to Metz, but the Prussians refused to allow the French to do so.

French cannon could not stand up to the new, more-advanced Prussian artillery

Image source: wiki/Brown University Providence, RI

With two Prussian armies nearly on top of him, MacMahon positioned his four infantry corps for battle on a series of ridges north of Sedan. Although Napoleon III was present at Sedan, he left direction of the battle to MacMahon. The French commander failed to destroy the bridges above and below the city to impede the deployment of the Prussian Third Army on the right bank.

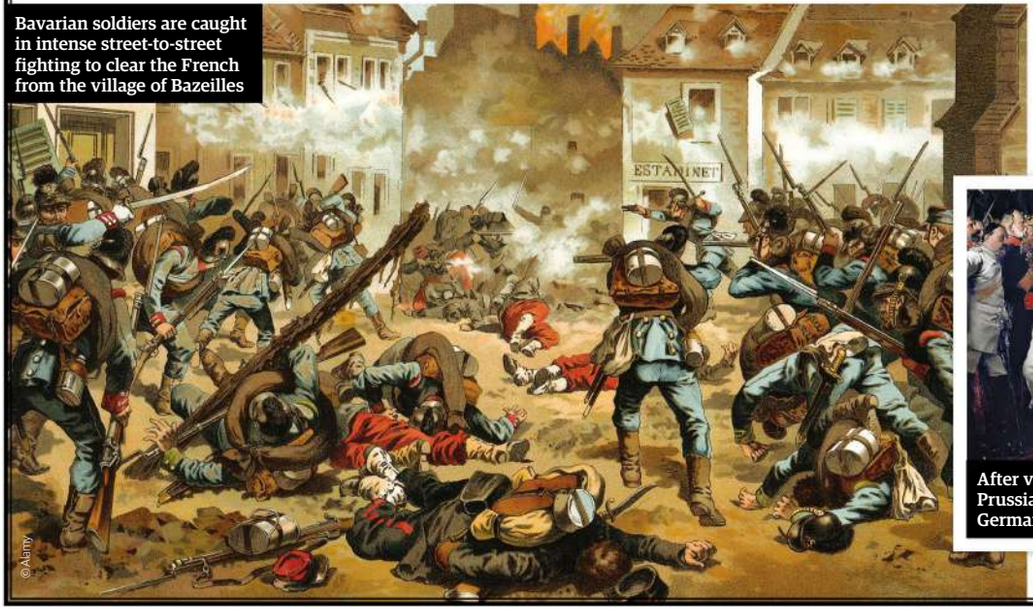
Should his army be forced to retreat towards the city, it would be caught on low ground at the mercy of Prussian guns on the surrounding hills. General Auguste-Alexandre Ducrot, commanding the French I Corps, suggested to MacMahon that the army would be better off deploying further north on a high plateau, but the French commander ignored his advice.

MacMahon arranged his four infantry corps in a triangle and sent General Barthélémy Lebrun's XII Corps east of the city where it deployed behind the narrow Givonne River from the villages of Bazeilles to Daigny. He ordered Ducrot's I Corps to deploy on its left flank from Daigny to the village of Givonne. To guard against an attack from the west, MacMahon sent General Félix Douay's VII Corps, supported by two cavalry divisions, to cover that approach. The remaining corps, General Emmanuel Wimpffen's V Corps, served as the reserve at the base of the triangle to support either side.

General Ludwig von der Tann sent the vanguard of his Royal Bavarian I Corps across the river above the town on 31 August, and General Julius von Bose did the same below with the lead elements of his XI Army Corps.

A thick fog clung to the village lanes and surrounding fields as von der Tann put his Bavarians in motion at 4am on 1 September. As the fighting heated up inside the village, elite French marines of General Jean de Vassoigne's Third Division of the French XII Corps fired at enemy troops from concealed positions in houses. The stiff resistance encountered did not surprise von der Tann, whose vanguard had clashed briefly with Lebrun's XII Corps on 31 August.

The French also had a battery of mitrailleuses in the village, which slowed the Bavarians. With von der Tann's brigades bogged down, it fell upon the Army of the Meuse to resume the pace of attack. The Royal Saxon XII Corps arrived at 5.30am and went into action on the right flank of the hard-pressed Bavarians. The real damage came not from the Saxon infantry but from 16 batteries supporting them. At 9am, Prince August von Württemberg's Guard Corps extended the Prussian line north as it went into action against Ducrot's I Corps.



Bavarian soldiers are caught in intense street-to-street fighting to clear the French from the village of Bazeilles

© Alamy

After victory in the Franco-Prussian war, Prussian King William I was proclaimed as the German emperor at the Palace of Versailles

Image source: wiki/ Museen Nord / Bismarck Museum

French Zouaves in advanced positions on the east bank of the Givonne River temporarily drove back the Saxons of General Erwin von Holderberg's 24th Division. But the Prussians massed their guns in a way that raked Lebrun's XII Corps and shattered Ducrot's assaults. The rifled guns made by Krupp had a range between 2,000-3,000 metres.

The French, with their superior infantry weapons, held the advantage on defence, and therefore it was incumbent upon the Prussians to pulverise enemy positions with their field guns before sending their infantry forward. Throughout the day, the Prussian gunners focused first on disabling French batteries – once that was done, they turned their guns on the unsupported French infantry.

Lebrun's XII Corps suffered converging fire from Prussian guns to the east and dozens of Prussian guns on the opposite side of the Meuse.

Reinforced by the Saxons, who attacked with fixed bayonets, and assisted by massed artillery on both banks, the Bavarians pushed through Bazeilles and advanced on the next village, Balan.

A key event occurred that morning that would shape the course of the battle when MacMahon was severely injured in the leg by shrapnel while riding at 5am towards the sound of battle east of the city. Ducrot, who was second-in-command, believed it was best for the French to retreat west before they were surrounded. He issued orders for the French I and XII corps to begin withdrawing west. A short time later, Wimpffen handed Ducrot a directive signed by the French minister of war. It stated that if MacMahon was wounded, Wimpffen, not Ducrot, was to replace him as army commander.

Unaware that an entire Prussian army was advancing up the right bank of the Meuse, Wimpffen believed it might be possible for the French to fight their way through the Prussian line east of Sedan and resume their march to relieve the French army trapped in Metz. For that reason, Wimpffen countermanded Ducrot's orders for a general withdrawal from the Givonne line.

As the Bavarians and Saxons battled the French east of the citadel, at 7.30am Crown Prince Frederick William sent two of his infantry corps to assail the French from the northwest. Von Bose's XI Corps led the way, followed by General Hugo von Kirchbach's V Corps. In order to reach their attack positions, the two corps had to march around a long bend in the Meuse.

Once his regiments reached their attack positions, Von Bose hurled them against the left flank of Douay's VII Corps, which was waiting for them at Floing. While von Bose's attack was under way, Kirchbach led his men onto the plateau that Ducrot had hoped to use to facilitate a French withdrawal to the west. When their regiments became intermingled, Kirchbach assumed overall control of both corps. The French were firing from shallow trenches on some of the ridges between the villages of Floing and Illy and it was hard to pry them out. The Third Army deployed 144 guns from 24 batteries firing explosive shells to support the two

FRENCH EMPIRE

PATRICE DE MACMAHON

A distinguished French marshal of Irish descent, MacMahon was handed control of French forces by Napoleon III but had to relinquish control himself when he was injured during this battle. With the Second Empire ending he served as chief of state of France for the new Republic from 1873 to 1875 and then as president of France from 1875 to 1879.

NAPOLEON III

While Napoleon had stepped away from control of the armed forces earlier in the Franco-Prussian War, he still accompanied MacMahon to lift the siege of Metz prior to this battle. Napoleon III's capture at Sedan effectively ended his reign and the Second French Empire. On his death bed his last words were reported as: "Isn't it true that we weren't cowards at Sedan?"

NORTH GERMAN CONFEDERATION

FREDERICK III

Friedrich Wilhelm was in charge of the Third Army and achieved successes in the Franco-Prussian War at Wissembourg and Wörth prior to the victory at Sedan for the North German Confederation. He would continue on to Paris and was made field marshal. When his father William I was made emperor in 1871, he became heir apparent and then Frederick III from 1888.

HELMUTH VON MOLTKE THE ELDER

Moltke was in charge of the Prussian forces through the Franco-Prussian War and had led the Third and Fourth armies at the Battle of Beaumont on 30 August 1870. He was renowned for his innovative tactics, being among the early adopters of railways for military purposes. Following the war he was made a count and served in the federal parliament.

5x © Getty Images

ALBERT OF SAXONY

Albert was a prince at the time of the Franco-Prussian War and led the Fourth Army through Buzancy, Beaumont and then Sedan, encircling the French from the east and north during that battle. He was made inspector general and field marshal after the war. Then, upon the death of his father in 1873, he became king of Saxony.

corps. French batteries supporting the VII Corps near the village of Floing were caught in a deadly crossfire from the Prussian guns in front of them, as well as Prussian guns enfilading them from across the Meuse.

The long lines of Prussian infantry steadily forced back the French VII Corps. The French only had two days' worth of rations in Sedan for their army. Unless the French could punch through that line, they were likely to be bottled up in Sedan with no rations to feed the soldiers.

By early afternoon, Prussian artillery dominated the battlefield. To the east, Ducrot's I Corps had been pried from the Givonne Line and its rifle companies and platoons fell back to the ridges and ravines in the Bois de la Garenne. Likewise, some of the riflemen from Douay's VII Corps sought protection from the omnipresent Prussian guns in the large tract of woods.

Ducrot, who was assisting Wimpffen in directing the army, called on the reserve cavalry. This was an attempt to punch a hole in the XI Corps, by which the French might be able to fight their way out to the west. The task fell to General Jean Margueritte's chasseurs. They thundered across the terrain between 1.30pm and 2pm, determined to attempt the impossible. Large swaths of men and horses were slain in the torrent of Prussian rifle and canister fire. As mid-afternoon approached, it was clear the Prussian field officers had executed a textbook example of Moltke's kesselschlacht.

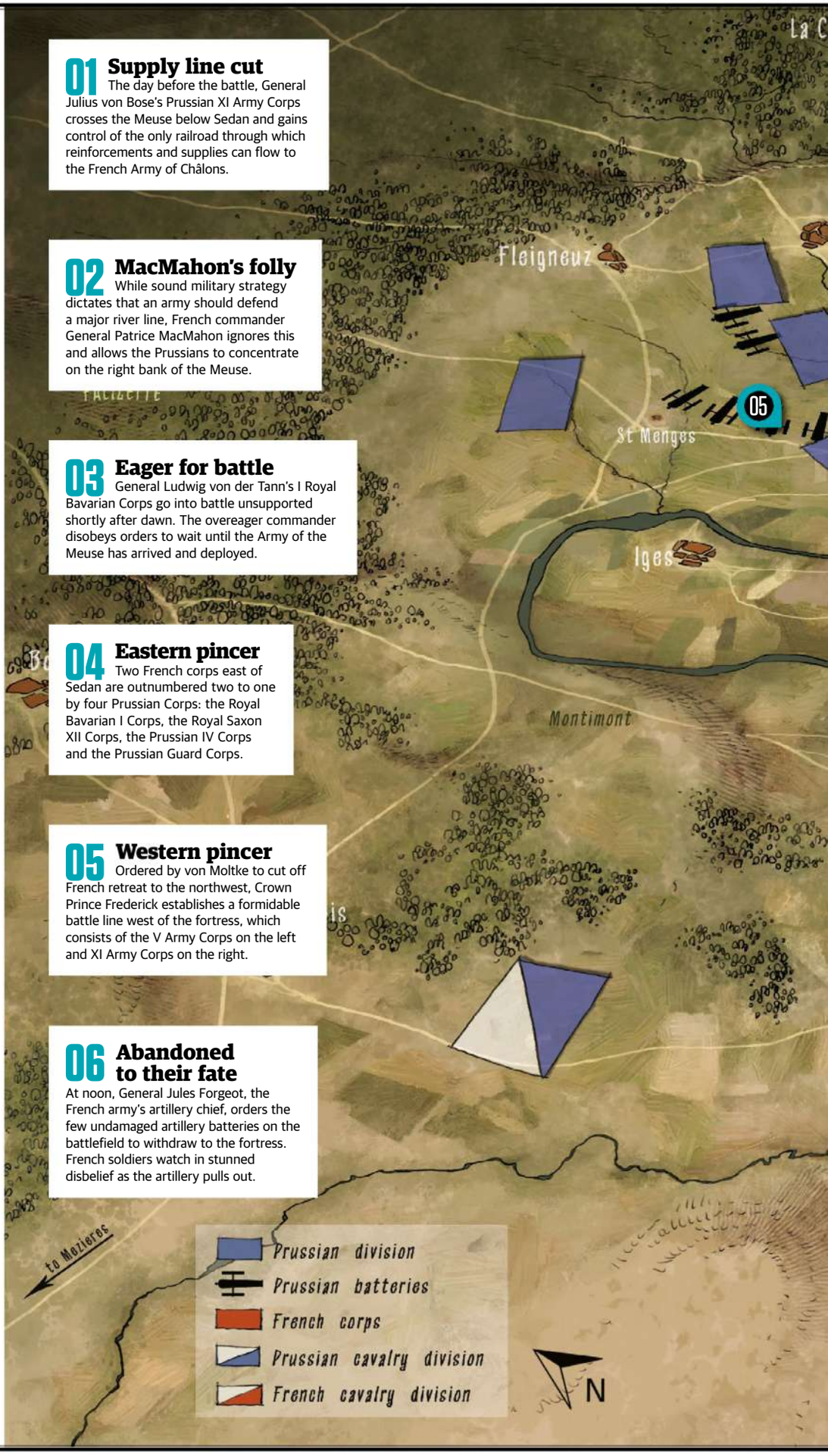
Prince August of Württemberg ordered ten batteries from the Guard Corps to shell every sector of the Bois de la Garenne. White flags appeared throughout the forest and at 2.30pm, the Guard regiments began mopping up.

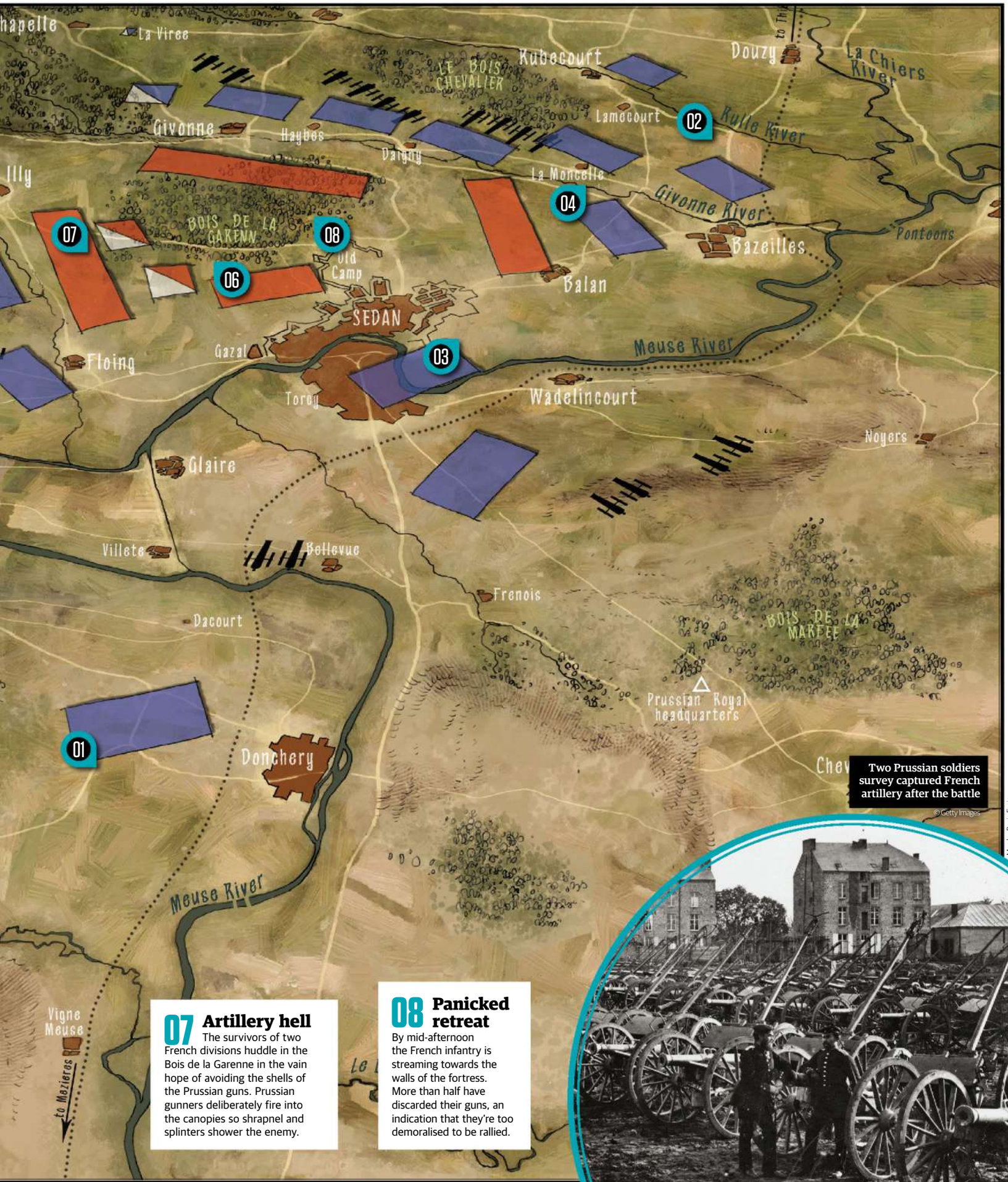
By late afternoon those French soldiers who had not been slain were streaming south toward the citadel. When they reached the citadel, they had a fresh shock: those inside had locked the gates. Driven to frenzy by the continued enemy shelling, many of the fugitives scaled the walls.

Sick of the killing, Napoleon III sent a dispatch through the lines to the German King requesting an immediate armistice. On the morning following the French defeat, Napoleon III met with Bismarck near the Prussian royal headquarters to complete the terms of the surrender. The French emperor requested that he be allowed to travel to captivity in Germany over a different route than his soldiers. Bismarck approved the request.

The Prussians had captured 21,000 prisoners during the battle, and they took 83,000 more on 2 September. The French had suffered 38,000 casualties compared to 9,000 Prussian casualties. Several thousand French soldiers escaped to Belgium. Trapped in Metz, the French Army of the Rhine surrendered in October. The Second Empire fell, and was replaced by the Third Republic.

On 18 January 1871, the Germans proclaimed King William as emperor of a united Germany. To add even more insult, the Germans took possession of Alsace-Lorraine.


01 Supply line cut
The day before the battle, General Julius von Bose's Prussian XI Army Corps crosses the Meuse below Sedan and gains control of the only railroad through which reinforcements and supplies can flow to the French Army of Châlons.
02 MacMahon's folly
While sound military strategy dictates that an army should defend a major river line, French commander General Patrice MacMahon ignores this and allows the Prussians to concentrate on the right bank of the Meuse.
03 Eager for battle
General Ludwig von der Tann's I Royal Bavarian Corps go into battle unsupported shortly after dawn. The overeager commander disobeys orders to wait until the Army of the Meuse has arrived and deployed.
04 Eastern pincer
Two French corps east of Sedan are outnumbered two to one by four Prussian Corps: the Royal Bavarian I Corps, the Royal Saxon XII Corps, the Prussian IV Corps and the Prussian Guard Corps.
05 Western pincer
Ordered by von Moltke to cut off French retreat to the northwest, Crown Prince Frederick establishes a formidable battle line west of the fortress, which consists of the V Army Corps on the left and XI Army Corps on the right.
06 Abandoned to their fate
At noon, General Jules Forgeot, the French army's artillery chief, orders the few undamaged artillery batteries on the battlefield to withdraw to the fortress. French soldiers watch in stunned disbelief as the artillery pulls out.
Fleigneuz
St Menges
Iges
Montimont
05
to Mezieres
Prussian division
Prussian batteries
French corps
Prussian cavalry division
French cavalry division
N



07 Artillery hell
The survivors of two French divisions huddle in the Bois de la Garenne in the vain hope of avoiding the shells of the Prussian guns. Prussian gunners deliberately fire into the canopies so shrapnel and splinters shower the enemy.

08 Panicked retreat
By mid-afternoon the French infantry is streaming towards the walls of the fortress. More than half have discarded their guns, an indication that they're too demoralised to be rallied.

Two Prussian soldiers survey captured French artillery after the battle

© Getty Images

Map by: Rocio Espin

What If...

ALEXANDER HAMILTON HAD BECOME PRESIDENT?

Did this US Founding Father, brave and brilliant yet impetuous and divisive, have the right stuff for the top job?

Interview by David J Williamson

INTERVIEW WITH

Photographer: Phillipa James

DR GRACE MALLON

Grace is a junior research fellow at Oxford University's Rothermere American Institute. Her research focuses on law, politics and government in the American founding era. Her writing has appeared in *The Washington Post*, *Reviews in History*, and *Publius: The Journal of Federalism*.

Politicians in any era of history often attract controversy, or even scandal, polarising the views of those around them. Alexander Hamilton was no exception; a man whose character, behaviour and policies created deep division. It is easy for his flawed personality and impetuous nature to create an image of colourful dramatic folklore. And yet, although never centre stage, alone in the presidential spotlight, the brilliance of his work behind the scenes, his vision and forethought for his infant nation, created structures and practices that helped shape the modern USA. Hamilton's legacy still resonates in the modern era and, for many, he is the 'President Who Never Was'.

What skills and experience did Hamilton have that could justify him as a potential presidential candidate?

Like George Washington and many others who served in government in the post-revolutionary United States, Hamilton had been a senior military officer during the Revolutionary War (1775-83). He had excellent credentials as a patriot. Like Thomas Jefferson and John Adams, he was qualified as a lawyer. Despite his low birth, he made a good marriage to Elizabeth Schuyler, daughter of the influential soldier and politician Philip Schuyler, and a descendant of New York's most powerful families. Perhaps most importantly Hamilton was a leading political activist. He was one of the framers of the US Constitution in the summer of 1787, and authored 51 of the Federalist essays, through which he and co-authors James Madison and John Jay hoped to sway the New York Ratifying Convention in favour of the Constitution. As the first US secretary of the treasury, Hamilton was also the author of several foundational financial policies and had considerable influence in other areas too. In fact, as Washington approached the end of his second term in 1796, his vice-president and 'heir apparent' Adams told his wife Abigail that he believed Hamilton would have enough support to succeed Washington as the nation's commander-in-chief.

What compromises and/or changes would have been necessary in Hamilton's political and personal life for him to succeed in office?

It is worth noting that there is an age qualification for the US presidency. According to the Constitution, the president must have "attained to the Age of thirty-five Years". There is some disagreement about when exactly he was born, but we know that Hamilton did not reach that age until January 1790 at the earliest. He would have been too young to run in the first presidential election, and he would never have stood against Washington, so if we are to imagine him

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Main image source: © Alamy, © Getty Images

RIGHT
Hamilton was one of the original Founding Fathers of the USA

THE PAST

1775-83

REVOLUTIONARY WAR

Determined to play as full a part as he could, Hamilton saw action a number of times, in particular the Battle of Princeton in 1777 as well as the Battle of Yorktown in 1781. As a lieutenant colonel he was aide to General George Washington, which began a long and sometimes fraught relationship. The American victory would see Hamilton become one of the Founding Fathers of the newly independent United States and a major contributor to the writing of the US Constitution. He was a great patriot but had practical views as to a future relationship with Britain.

1789-95

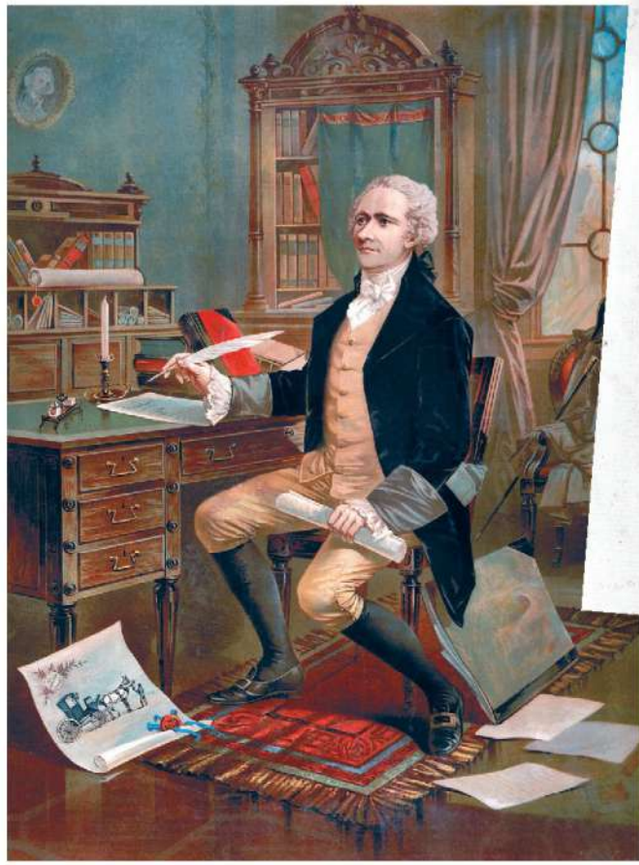
MONEY, MONEY, MONEY

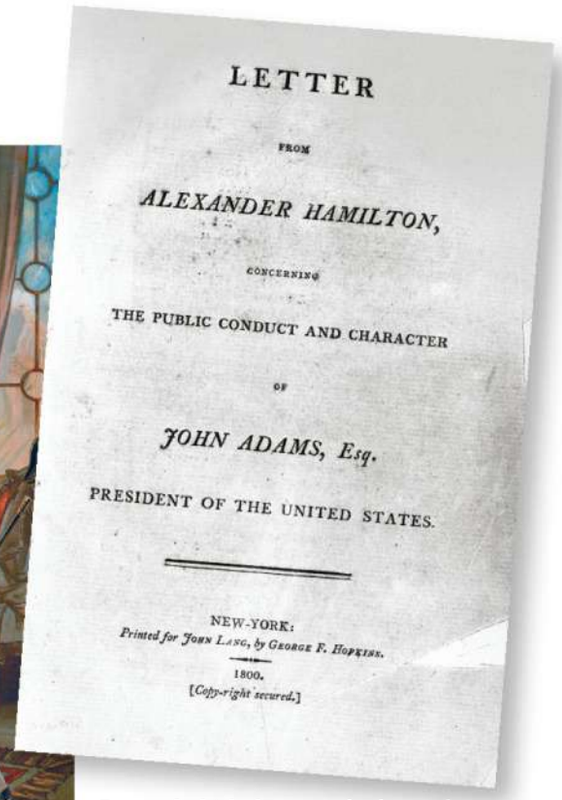
As secretary of the treasury under Washington, Hamilton's vision was of a strong and centralised government, with a centralised bank. He set about debating and arguing his policy against sometimes fierce opposition. He prevailed, and in 1791 the First National Bank of the United States was created in Philadelphia. He also had the foresight of creating a single currency, the dollar, and the new National Mint began operating in 1793. The first coins were minted and circulated the following year, creating a currency that would, and still does, dominate trade and finance around the world.

1804

AN UNTIMELY END

It was Hamilton's ability to make political enemies that would rob him of his life. Outspoken, arrogant and single-minded, he was adept at playing the political game in order to push his own views and supporters. But with Aaron Burr, presidential candidate and political adversary, he would push too far. Hamilton's public criticism of Burr's character and abilities reached boiling point and in June 1804, despite his position as US vice-president, Burr challenged Hamilton to a duel to defend his honour. In July 1804 the two men faced each other with loaded pistols. Accounts vary as to who fired first, but Hamilton suffered a mortal wound and died the next day.





ABOVE
Hamilton's legacy lives on into the modern world

ABOVE-RIGHT
He was not afraid to openly criticise his opponents with published letters

running for president, we must imagine him running in 1796 or 1800.

If he had run for president, Hamilton would've had to moderate his politics and his personality quite significantly. From early on in his career, he developed a reputation as an extremist within his own party. At the 1787 Constitutional Convention, Hamilton seemed to suggest that the state governments should be abolished under the new Constitution, horrifying his fellow delegates. The economic policy programme he pursued while secretary of the treasury generated considerable opposition in Congress and in the states. Hamilton encouraged President Washington to put down the 1794 Whiskey Rebellion, not by negotiating with the so-called rebels but by raising a 12,000-man army and suppressing the unrest by force. His opponents saw Hamilton as someone who wanted to restore the spirit of the British Empire in America – monarchism, militarism and manufacturing. After their hard-fought victory in the Revolutionary War, many Americans were fearful of this possibility.

He could've written the book on 'How to Lose Friends and Alienate People' two centuries before Toby Young! He scandalised Jefferson with his openly pro-British attitude and fell out so badly with Adams as to produce a schism in the Federalist Party, of which they were both members. Hamilton would've struggled to hold together a coalition of differing interests in support of his political programme, a key skill in party management.

His personal life was no less tricky, especially after he publicly confessed to an affair with a married woman, Maria Reynolds. It would also have served his political career rather better if he had avoided getting himself killed in an 1804 duel with Aaron Burr.

Which political figures would've been the winners and losers in a Hamilton administration and why?
Hamilton's ascendancy would have been bad news for fellow Federalist Adams. Throughout the late 1790s in particular, their mutual antagonism was perhaps the defining feature of politics within the Federalist Party. Hamilton was openly disdainful of Adams and went so far as to campaign against him in the run-up to the presidential election of 1800. The other major loser would have been Jefferson, the figurehead of the opposition, and, by extension, Jefferson's supporters. The winners would probably have been those who shared in Hamilton's brand of 'High Federalism' and favoured a powerful US government. People like Oliver Wolcott Jr and Timothy Pickering would have done well out of a Hamilton presidency.

How might he have used his office to drive social reform, and how far might he have tried to go?
Hamilton, like many Northern politicians, was not in favour of affording excessive influence in government to the Southern

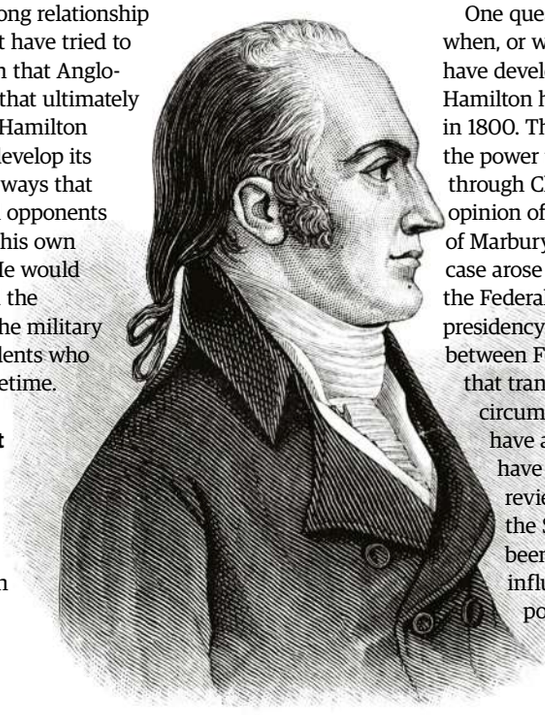
plantation aristocracy. He was also a member of the New York Manumission Society, an anti-slavery organisation. These facts, and his portrayal in the *Hamilton* musical, have suggested to some that he was rather more openly and actively anti-slavery than he was in real life. Many of the political leaders of Hamilton's generation made anti-slavery gestures by supporting societies of this kind, though few of them were actually prepared to bear the personal or political costs of abolition. His wife's family, the Schuylers, owned slaves, and evidence has recently come to light that suggests Hamilton may also have bought, sold and owned slaves himself.

ABOVE
The Bank of the United States was one of Hamilton's many achievements

How differently would the economy and foreign policy have developed under Hamilton?

He had extraordinary influence over policy as Washington's secretary of the treasury. Much of what the Washington administration is remembered for in policy terms came from Hamilton, so in a real sense Hamilton did not need to become president to have an enormous impact on the history of American government. Even the Jeffersonians, who actively sought to dismantle Hamilton's legacy, left in place large parts of the national financial infrastructure he'd created. But Hamilton's policy priorities did diverge in important ways from those of Washington, Adams and especially Jefferson. He was strongly in favour of using the power of the federal government to encourage the growth of industrial manufacturing in the US and would doubtless have worked hard to promote that development while president. He would certainly have prioritised a positive relationship with Great Britain over a strong relationship with France, and might have tried to avoid the breakdown in that Anglo-American relationship that ultimately led to the War of 1812. Hamilton wanted to see the US develop its military capabilities in ways that made both his political opponents and some members of his own party uncomfortable. He would likely have encouraged the professionalisation of the military more than those presidents who did serve during his lifetime.

BELOW
Aaron Burr mortally wounded Hamilton in a duel in 1804



How different might the US have looked constitutionally if he'd had his way?

Both Washington and Jefferson stepped down as president after two terms, despite the fact that each of them had enough political support to run for election again, and that in the 18th and 19th centuries there was no constitutional limit to how many times they could run. It seems doubtful, however, that President Hamilton would've stepped down after two terms, and he might even have established a precedent for three- or four-term presidencies in the 19th century.

Hamilton's preference for a broad interpretation of the powers of the US government under the Constitution was showcased through his role in the establishment of the Bank of the United States during the First Federal Congress, when he argued that Congress had the power to charter corporations, despite the fact that this was nowhere explicitly mentioned in the constitutional text. It's likely that he would have relied on this kind of argument as president, which might have had a longer-term impact on both constitutional interpretation and the de facto powers of the US government.

One question that presents itself is when, or whether, the United States would have developed federal judicial review if Hamilton had won a presidential election in 1800. The Supreme Court granted itself the power to overturn acts of Congress through Chief Justice John Marshall's opinion of the court in the 1803 case of Marbury v Madison. This complex case arose out of the transition from the Federalist regime of Adams to the presidency of Jefferson, and the conflict between Federalists and Jeffersonians. If that transition had not taken place, the circumstances of the case might never have arisen, and Marshall might not have needed to create federal judicial review to resolve it. As a result, the Supreme Court might not have been able to exert such a substantial influence over federal law and policy, at least at that time.

THE POSSIBILITY

1796 – 1804

THE SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP IS BORN EARLY

Hamilton had proposed the president and elected representatives should hold office for life unless found to act improperly or illegally. This prompted criticism that he wanted a kind of monarchy and that his affiliations were too close to Britain. He certainly saw Britain as a major trading partner, and as president he may have furthered this relationship. This would've avoided support for Britain's adversaries, especially the French, and averted any direct conflict that led to the War of 1812.

1796 TO ??

RUN, RUN, RUN

With no official restrictions at this time to the number of terms a president could serve, and given his political passion and self-belief, had Hamilton become president he would have stayed in office for as long as possible. He would've wanted to have seen his ideas and policies be truly embedded into the US political systems and way of life. Such stability could well have seen the US develop into the same world political and military superpower, but perhaps much sooner. And for a man who relished standing up for his views and taking on his opponents, a long stay in office would have made presidency even more alluring.

1865

ONE FLAG, ONE NATION

As a Federalist, Hamilton was a staunch believer in a stronger, single, federal government at the expense of the power of the individual states. He was also very vocal and politically active in his views against slavery. Recent study has questioned this view, but if Hamilton as president had had his way then a move to a strong industrial economy, including in the Southern states, could have meant more direct pressure by central government to end slavery long before its abolition in 1865. Such economic cohesion could also have played a major role in avoiding the schism between the North and South that led to the US Civil War.

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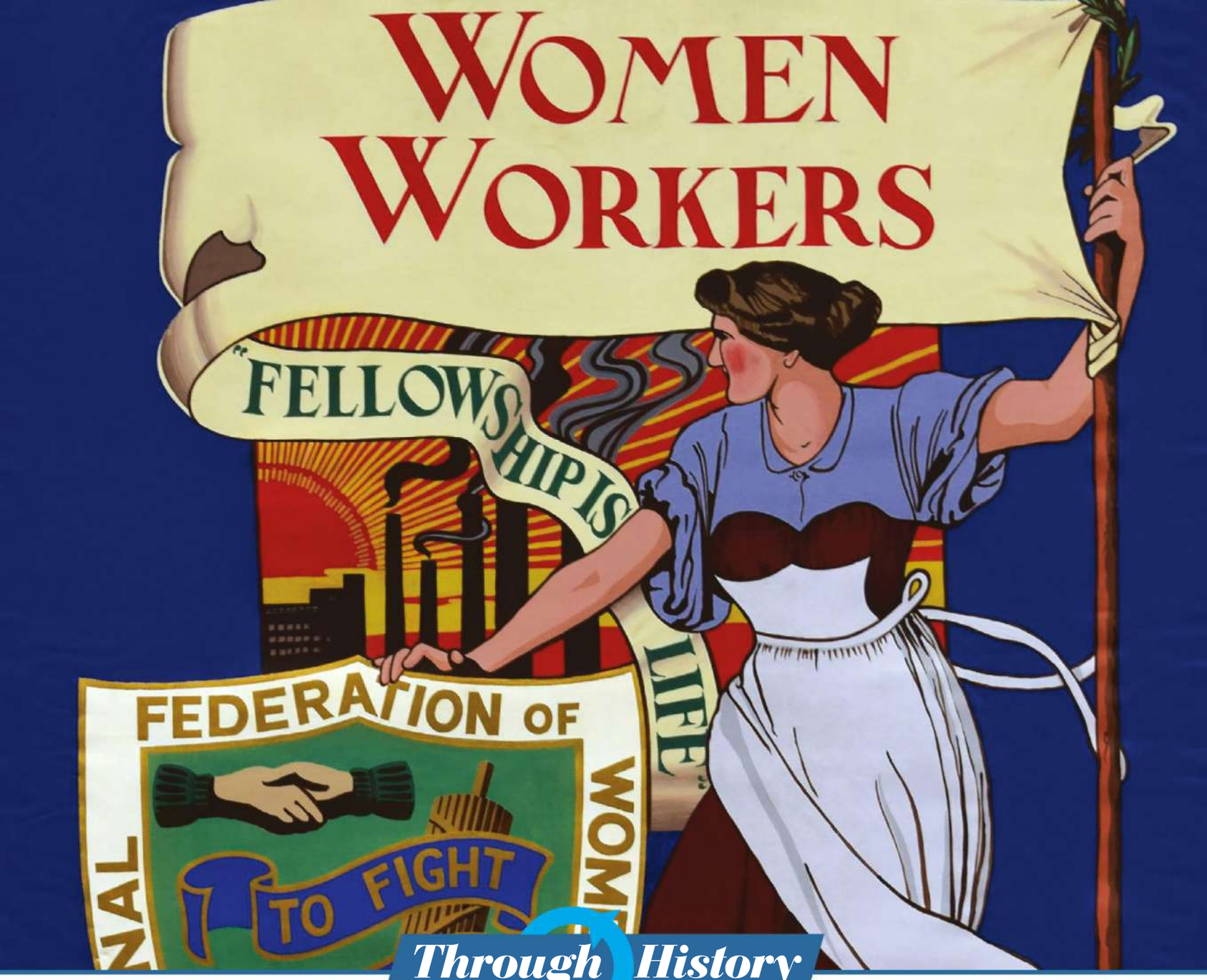


Through History

MARCHING FOR CHANGE

A new exhibition displays banners from groundbreaking moments of protest

All images: Courtesy of People's History Museum, Manchester

Protest has been an important part of British democracy and public expression for hundreds of years. Collective action and demonstrations have led to real change for people who have felt like they have been dismissed or ignored by those in power. An important aspect of these public demonstrations are the banners, signs and placards carried by the participants to grab the attention of the people who have the ability to answer their requests. At the People's History Museum in Manchester, UK, a new exhibition is displaying 26 banners of this kind that together cover 150 years of history of British activism, with several banners going on display for the very first time.

As the national museum of democracy, the People's History Museum's Banner Exhibition aims to highlight the power of British collective action by displaying a selection of banners that have been used to fight for justice and positive change. The issues represented by these banners range from climate change to women's rights and stand as a physical symbol and reminder of what can be achieved through protest. The banners will be available to view throughout the museum's main galleries, and visitors can also book places on a guided tour to find out more about the banners. The exhibition will run throughout 2023.

UNION AND VICTORY

▲ Made for the 1889 Great London Dock Strike, this banner was carried by striking dockers and labourers who demanded better pay, conditions and consideration from their employers. The strike was successful and resulted in the establishment of a Labourers' Union.

ASCOTT MARTYRS QUILT

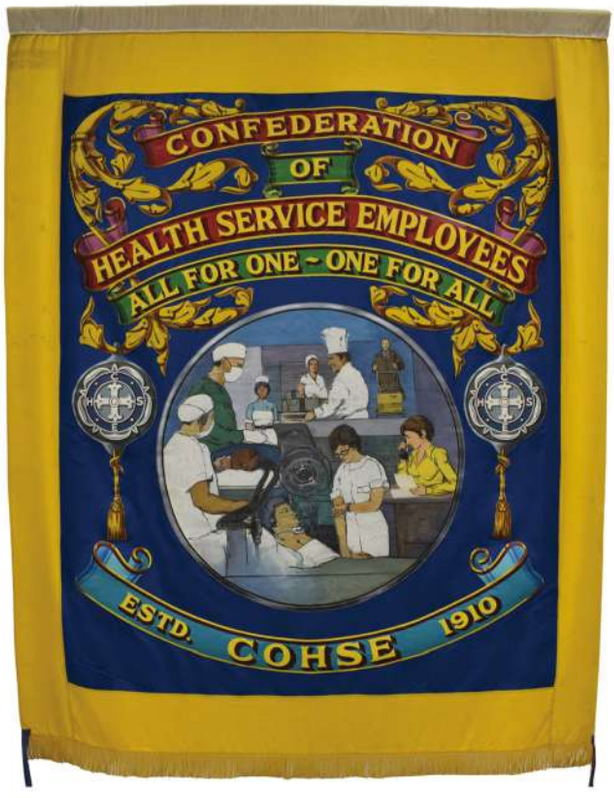
◀ Made 150 years ago this quilt was created by Martha Smith, one of 16 women who prevented labourers being hired to replace their husbands who were on strike for improved wages. The women's arrest for picketing inspired a wave of protests.

The People's History Museum's 2023 Banner Exhibition

The exhibition is open now, exploring the power of democracy and collective action

DISABLED PEOPLE AGAINST CUTS

Carried in recent protests, the Disabled People Against Cuts banner was first used at an anti-austerity rally in 2015. The rally was held before the Conservative Party Conference of that year and demanded more rights for the disabled community.



ALL FOR ONE

Created for the Confederation of Health Services Employees, an organisation that campaigned for better pay and conditions for ambulance workers and nurses, this banner dates from 1978. It was made by the renowned firm Toye, Kenning & Spencer.

WHICH TOMORROW?

Dating from 1996, this banner predates the recent wave of environmental protests and highlights that action against climate change is a long-fought issue.

THE WOMEN'S CO-OPERATIVE

▼ Dating from around 1920, this banner was made by the prominent Toye, Kenning & Spencer to promote women's rights and equality. The woman pictured on the banner holds a shopping basket to signal the economic power held by women over the household.

STYLE AND SUBSTANCE

▶ Creating a distinctive image for protest and strike banners is vital to their impact. This banner from 1912 was designed in the Art Nouveau style and features the needlework of three women: Winifred Horrabin, Winifred Blachford and Rebecca West.

SAVE ME

▶ Designed and created by seven-year-old Annabelle, this banner is one of the more recent on display. It was used in the climate change protests that swept the nation after Greta Thunberg initiated school strikes in 2018.

REVIEWS

The books, TV shows and films causing a stir in the history world this month

2x © Alamy

TILL

A thought-provoking account of how a brutal murder fuelled the civil rights movement

Certificate: 12A **Director:** Chinonye Chukwu **Cast:** Danielle Deadwyler, Jamie Renell, Whoopi Goldberg **Released:** Out now

In August 1955, 14-year-old Emmett Till (Jalyn Hall), born and bred in Chicago, was visiting relatives in Mississippi. During his stay, he was kidnapped, tortured, mutilated and shot in the head. His corpse was then thrown into the Tallahatchie River and found days later by two boys out fishing. With his facial features bloated and deformed, young Till could only be identified by a distinctive ring he wore, which had once belonged to his war hero father.

Till is a gripping retelling of what became a pivotal episode in the fight to end racial segregation in America. In the main it's focused on the aftermath of Emmett's death and how Mamie Till (Danielle Deadwyler), his heartbroken mother, could not – and would not – let her only son die in vain. Her decision to court local and national press, with valuable help from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, had a major impact. She granted photographers access to Emmett's body and for their pictures to be published unedited. Americans, both Black and white, both in the north and in the south, were appalled by what they saw. Emmett's severely bloated corpse symbolised horror, oppression and inequality. What it represented too was a people who'd had enough. Mamie Till found herself on a mission to shock, to disturb, to shake a nation's complacency. The barbarous act – Emmett was killed in reprisal for allegedly whistling at a white woman outside a store – had to have meaning beyond the statistical, beyond being another victim in a long line of grotesque homicides against African Americans.

It is said a picture is worth a thousand words. Director Chinonye Chukwu knows this to be a key cinematic truism and demonstrates it with expertly deployed prolonged close-ups of Deadwyler's face, whose tremendously affecting performance headlines the film. This extensive use of close-ups captures the torrents of emotions surging through Mamie Till. Twinned with composer Abel Korzeniowski's plangent arrangements, image and sound communicate more than reams of dialogue ever could and the effect achieved is devastating without resorting to melodramatic grandstanding.

Co-written by investigative journalist and Emmett Till scholar Keith Beauchamp, *Till* is an elegantly crafted, sensitively handled though on occasion deeply troubling drama. It also explores what it's like to all of a sudden navigate complex relationships, on both personal and political levels. Mamie Till was a working single mother and war widow doing her best before her life changed forever. Suddenly, she had to deal with guilt-ridden family members, lawyers, activists, intense media attention and journalists wanting a scoop, as well as sympathetic and unsympathetic politicians. She also had to share space with her son's killers in the courtroom and endure racist southerners who spread conspiracy theories during the trial. Yet through it all she maintained her courage and dignity, was unafraid to take on the system, and did so with a remarkable inner strength. ***MC***

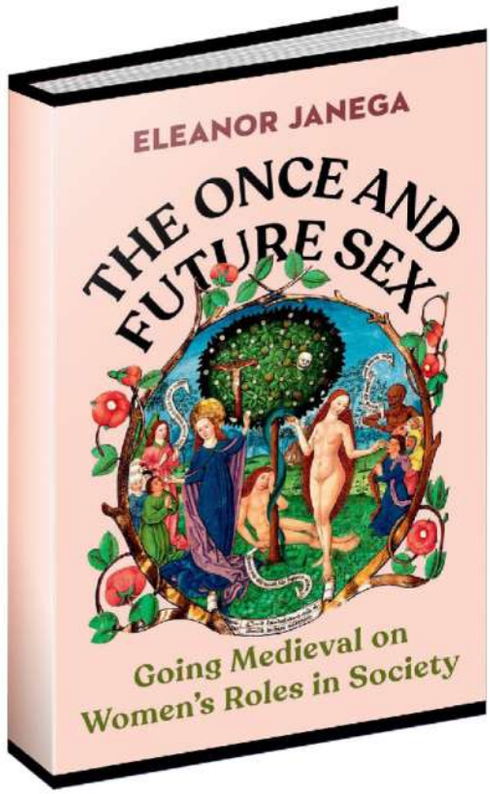
★★★★½

Reviews by
Martyn Conterio, Emily Staniforth, Callum McKelvie, Catherine Curzon

THE ONCE AND FUTURE SEX

Exploring the medieval feminine ideal

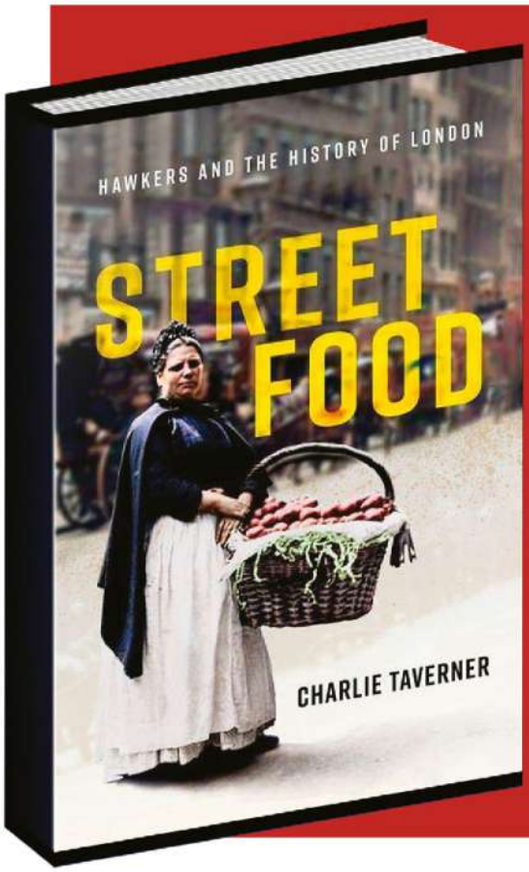
Author: Eleanor Janega **Publisher:** Norton **Price:** £22 **Released:** 3 March 2023



When we think of medieval women, our thoughts tend to drift towards the women we can put a name to. Figures like Eleanor of Aquitaine and Joan of Arc are known to us because of their subversive attitudes and the mark they made on history. But what was life like for ordinary medieval women? How were they expected to act and behave and how were they treated? In *The Once and Future Sex: Going Medieval on Women's Roles in Society*, Dr Eleanor Janega delves into medieval perspectives on womanhood to understand the ideals of femininity from the past all the way to the present day.

In this entertaining and revealing book, Janega examines sources written by both men and women to determine how medieval women were expected to be and how they viewed themselves, drawing parallels between medieval ideas on education, fashion and sex to the modern day throughout. Janega skilfully weaves a modern cultural commentary through her research into the medieval world, highlighting similarities and differences to today's world for women and focussing our attention on the importance of analysing history as a way to understand the present. With references from Hippocrates to Billie Eilish, this book does not confine itself to the medieval but uses that era as a prism through which to view thousands of years of social constructs and thought on the female ideal. If you are looking for some female-centred reading this Women's History Month, *The Once and Future Sex* is a great choice. ***ES***

★★★★★



STREET FOOD

HAWKERS AND THE HISTORY OF LONDON

A history of London's street foods to tickle the taste buds

Author: Charlie Taverner **Publisher:** Oxford University Press
Price: £30 **Released:** Out now

Today, any visitor to London with a few pounds in their pocket and an empty belly is spoiled for choice by the array of quick and easy street food. But what are the origins of this phenomenon? In *Street Food* author Charlie Taverner shines a light on the street hawkers of London's past who provided much-needed nourishment to the city's inhabitants. Yet their story has, for the most part, gone untold.

These street hawkers sold a wide variety of items such as oysters, cherries, pies and milk for 300 years. One particular fact of interest is Taverner's suggestion that they were integral in providing the city's inhabitants with nutrient-rich foods, notably fruit. One source Taverner quotes observes that although London's citizens did not eat fruit at the dinner table they could be observed scoffing it in the street "like so many goats".

In a fascinating epilogue, Taverner explores how the hawking industry collapsed in the 20th century, before discussing the 21st century's street food renaissance. This current phenomenon gives visitors to the capital a wide selection of dishes from across the globe in regular market spots. Taverner does note, however, that little connection can be made to London's hawker past, but nonetheless it is a tantalising taste of London's street food present and future...

Highly enjoyable, well researched and full of details, *Street Food* is a must read for anyone with a hunger for London's culinary history. ***CM***

★★★★½

Out now!

Operation Market Garden

The final years of World War II saw the Allies win epic battles, but also brought memorable defeats. One such failure was the allied attack on the bridges leading over the Rhine into Germany. This bookazine explores Operation Market Garden and the Battle of Arnhem in fine detail. Using stunning photography and unforgettable accounts, this Allied operation is brought to life.

Buy *Operation Market Garden* in shops or online at **magazinesdirect.com Price:** £13.99

HISTORY of WAR **RECOMMENDS...**

Out now!

Spying On The Reich

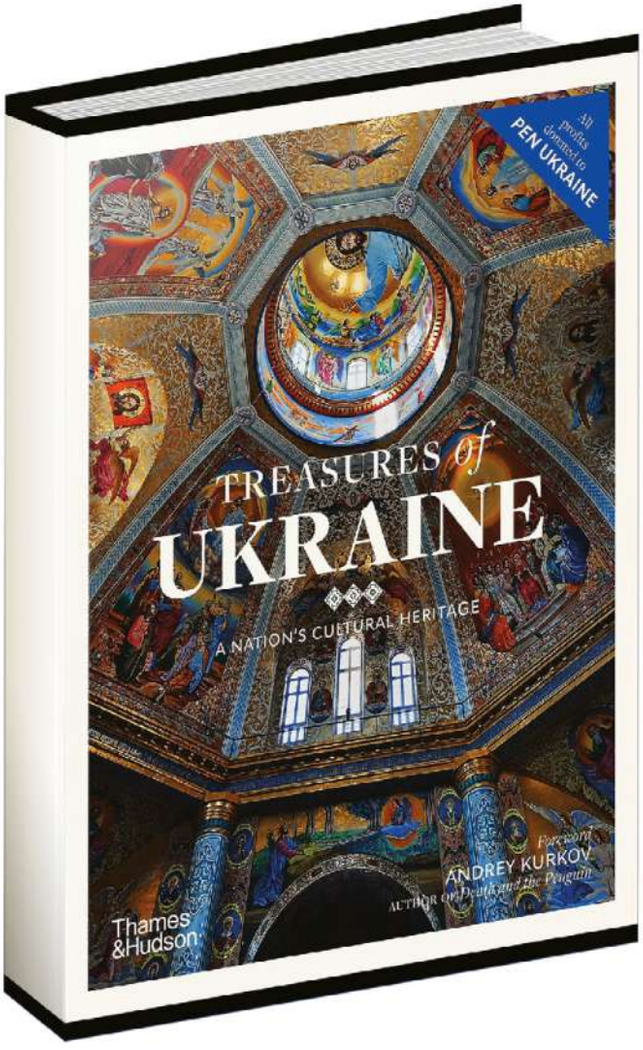
Author RT Howard **Price** £25 **Publisher** Oxford University Press

As its name suggests, Spying on The Reich looks at the role various intelligence agencies played in monitoring Nazi Germany in the build-up to World War II. Making use of previously classified documents, its author RT Howard does an admirable job of trying to piece together a coherent picture of how these agencies operated, and what they uncovered. Its narrative rattles along like a thriller in places, with plenty of colourful incidents and characters thrown in to keep things interesting.

TREASURES OF UKRAINE: A NATION'S CULTURAL HERITAGE

Discover the rich and fascinating story of Ukrainian culture

Author: Multiple authors, foreword by Andrey Kurkov **Publisher:** Thames & Hudson **Price:** £25 **Released:** Out now



"A valuable reminder of the threat posed to Ukraine, its people and its heritage"

This book is a stunning showcase of the cultural treasures of Ukraine, whether architectural, decorative or everything in between. It encompasses a range of items and buildings including everything from simple wooden churches to modern municipal buildings, and historical city seals to state-of-the art video installations. It could not come at a more important moment for Ukraine and is a rich, rewarding and ultimately moving celebration of the country's long history, told through treasures from the humble to the opulent.

Treasures of Ukraine is divided into chronological chapters, beginning with the earliest prehistory and guiding readers all the way to the present day. There is also a fascinating examination of Ukraine's folk art, which serves to close the book. Each topic, artefact or building is accompanied by short essays by experts including artists, critics and curators, who provide explanations and insight into not only the sometimes complex identity of the item under discussion but also its place in the history of Ukraine. Of course, there is also thoughtful consideration of Ukraine's present situation after the Russian invasion and the impact on the items and buildings.

Told through its buildings and objects, the history of Ukraine presented here is complex and at times ever-changing. Art, of course, has often reflected this, and the authors consider how the country's artists and architects have responded to political change, with each one reflective of the circumstances that created it, for better or worse.

Treasures of Ukraine serves as the perfect introduction to the important role that culture has played in the history of Ukraine, from the earliest days to the shattering circumstances of today. Its chronological approach takes the reader on an accessible journey through the centuries, charting the complex, rich and sometimes troubled history of Ukraine. It's also a pleasure to see the numerous examples of vernacular art that are sprinkled liberally throughout the book too, effortlessly drawing the country's folk history into the broader historic picture.

As is to be expected from a book celebrating centuries of cultural treasures, it is richly illustrated in full colour and the short essays that make up each chapter tread the fine line between accessible and authoritative wonderfully. While this may not be a book for a reader who already has more than a passing interest in the subject, it is an excellent introduction to the novice or primer for those who may have occasionally dabbled in art history or the history of Ukraine.

Treasures of Ukraine: A Nation's Cultural Heritage should appeal to a very broad range of readers, from those who are fascinated by the country's history to lovers of art or architecture. However, this richly illustrated and fascinating book should also find a more general readership. There is much to enjoy here, and it serves as a valuable reminder of the threat posed to Ukraine, its people and its heritage. ***CC***

★★★★★

HISTORY VS HOLLYWOOD

Fact versus fiction on the silver screen

THE FOUNDER

Director: John Lee Hancock **Starring:** Michael Keaton, Nick Offerman, John Carroll Lynch **Country:** USA **Year:** 2016

The story of Ray Kroc, the man who made McDonald's a household name – but is it filled with as many facts as it is French fries?

VERDICT: Despite a few major diversions, this is a mostly accurate portrayal of the little-known events that led to the creation of McDonald's as we know it today

01 The film tells the story of how Ray Kroc (Keaton) founded the McDonald's empire. As depicted, Kroc really was a milkshake salesman who was impressed by the McDonald brothers' San Bernardino restaurant and its Speedee Service System.

02 The film rightly depicts that the famous Golden Arches that became the logo of McDonald's were not first visualised by Kroc but by the brothers Dick and Mac. In 1952 architect and one-time set designer Dick Meston visualised the concept for the pair.

03 A pivotal point during the narrative is the introduction of instant milkshakes to the McDonald's menu, with Kroc's soon-to-be-wife Joan being the instigator of the idea. In reality Kroc was already familiar with these products from his days as a salesman.

04 To take control, Kroc buys out the brothers. Part of the deal includes one percent of the royalties based on a handshake deal, which Kroc never pays. Although sources dispute this, relatives of the brothers maintain that an agreement was made and reneged on.

05 At the climax of the film Kroc states he is the founder of McDonald's. The brothers claimed that as soon as the buyout was completed, Kroc began to refer to himself as the founder and claimed the McDonald's in Des Plaines, Illinois, was the first restaurant.

Allimages © Alamy

Did you know?

For firmer vegetables, strain the meat and broth after three hours and add fresh carrots, leeks, etc to the pot

Main image: © Shutterstock
Inset image: © Alamy

POT-AU-FEU

A CLASSIC FRENCH BEEF DISH, FRANCE, 16TH CENTURY – PRESENT

Ingredients

- 500g beef shoulder
- 1 beef cheek
- 500g brisket
- 4 marrow bones (optional)
- 4 carrots peeled and halved crosswise
- 2 leeks, white and pale parts only, cut into 6cm lengths
- 2 celery stalks, halved crosswise
- 340g small potatoes
- 1 small turnip, peeled and quartered
- 1 small parsnip, peeled and quartered lengthwise
- 1 onion
- 1 whole head of garlic
- 4 sprigs of thyme
- 4 sprigs of parsley
- 1 bay leaf
- 3 cloves
- 2 bouillon cubes
- 10 peppercorns
- 1 pinch of salt

We have some interesting details on the diet of Catherine the Great, with claims that she was what we might call today a fussy eater. Among the dishes we know she ate as empress, a fish soup using champagne is an interesting example, but most agree that she particularly enjoyed boiled beef, usually served with pickles and vegetables.

The exact recipe for her boiled beef is unclear, but given that she embraced all things French it seems reasonable to suggest it would be similar to the dish pot-au-feu, meaning 'pot on the fire'. The first records of this dish can be traced back to the Romans, but the recipe began to take on its popular form in the late 1500s as wealthy people had more access to meat and came to enjoy the tender beef and broth concoction.

METHOD

01 Rinse the meat under running water and place it all (except the marrow) in a large Dutch oven.

02 Add cold water until it covers the meat, plus about another 50 percent on top of that.

03 Bring the pot of meat to the boil, bringing any impurities to the surface. Lower the heat and skim these from the pot.

04 Stud the onion with the cloves and place it in the pot. Prepare the other vegetables (except the potatoes) and add those too. Cut the head of garlic in half crosswise and add. Add the bouillon cubes, herbs, bay leaf, salt and peppercorns.

05 Cook the meat and vegetables over a low heat for three hours, until the meat is fork tender, skimming off the impurities every 30 minutes.

06 If any piece of meat becomes tender before the others, remove it to a heat-proof bowl and cover with some broth from the pot until the rest is ready. (Top up the Dutch oven if needed.)

07 After three hours, add the potatoes and bone marrow and cook for an additional 30 minutes until potatoes are tender and marrow is warmed through.

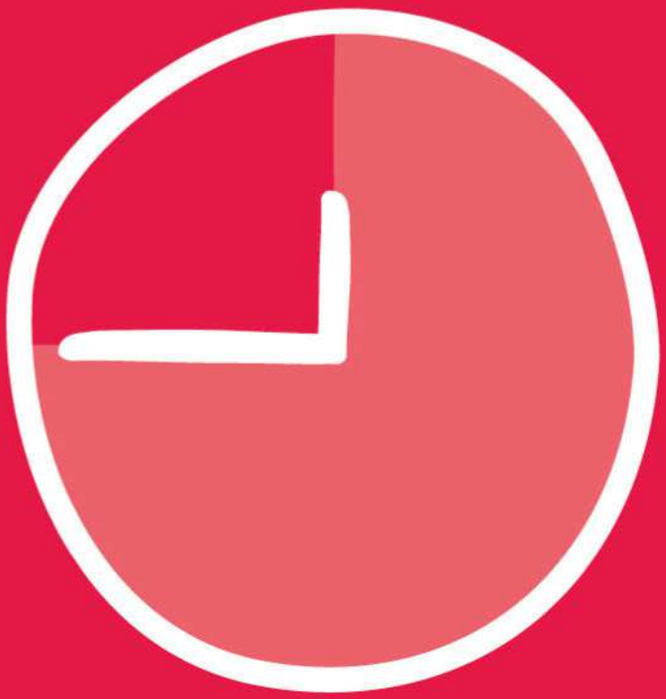
09 Remove the meat and vegetables, slicing larger cuts of meat across the grain before serving. The meal can be enjoyed in the broth or with the broth as a soup on its own.

10 Pot-au-feu can also be served with crusty bread, mustard, horseradish, pickles and/or sour cream.

NEXT MONTH VICTORIAN MEDICINE ON SALE 23 MARCH

THE BRAIN TUMOUR CHARITY

A CURE CAN'T WAIT



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"This fabulous book reveals our fears, hardships, humor, trust in each other and creation of a bond that still endures to this day. A must-read for teachers and students of combat leadership."

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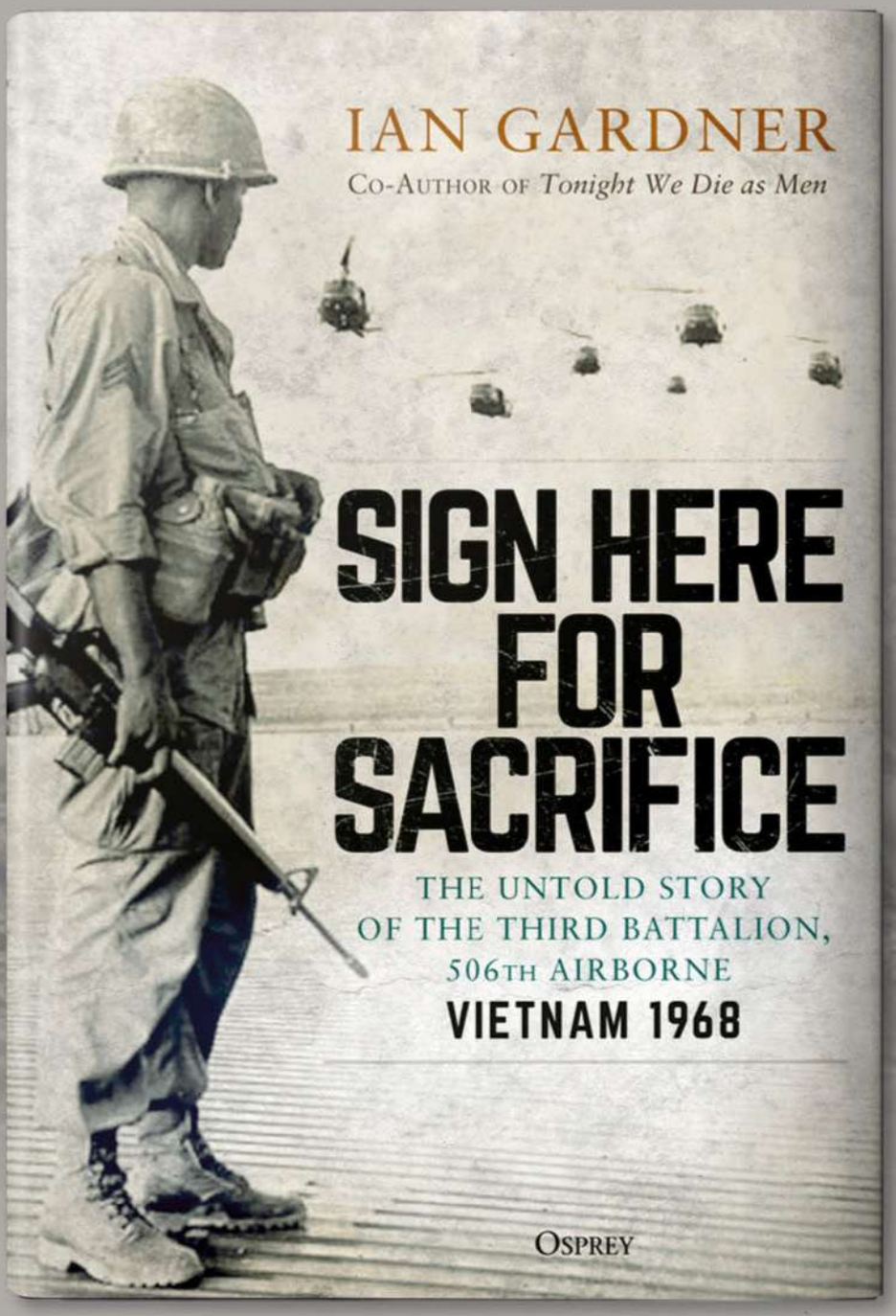
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